



FAMOUS
MONSTERS
OF FILMLAND

#234

A CENTRAL MEDIA PUBLICATION

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SCRAPBOOK

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—DR. AX

*Twin brother of editor Ferry. A real sharp character who's always a cut above the competition.)



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On the cover: The immortal Bela Lugosi as Count Dracula! Illustration by FM's master of the macabre, Arlis.

Artist's comments: "Although Lugosi achieved his greatest fame in the 1931 version of DRACULA, it is the way he appeared in ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN in 1948 that is his most compelling image. Older FM fans like me will remember this pose from issue #30 and I'm happy to have been able to create a new illustration of it for the younger fans to call their own."



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Reader's special die-liveries from the US Ghost Office sent to us direct by pony hex-press!

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News and reviews from the weird world of monsters.

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The grand master of B-movies speaks out about his career, his art, and his new TV series in his feast-ever feature interview in the pages of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. (It's about time!)

POISON TO POISON

First off, in response to those of you have written and asked that we expand our reach to include more contemporary films, let me say that we will, although we'll continue to keep our primary focus on the classics. We'll also be bringing you a new regular column on makeup and SP/FX, starting in the next issue. Same old FM, but with some exciting new additions!

Now for some year-end thoughts: It occurred to me recently that—for those of us who really enjoy the wacky world of monsters—we've finally completed the circle. After years of longing to re-embrace the tangible things of our youth that dear, sweet mom relegated to the waste bin eons ago, our dream has been fulfilled. There are precious few toys, models, books and movies that haven't either been reissued, remade or are attainable in their original incarnations via a few quick key-strokes on the Internet. Since we all tend to be of like mind where these treasures are concerned, I dare say you've probably accumulated a sizeable stash of goodies for your own collections. Now, perhaps I'm a bit jaded, but it all seems just a bit unrewarding at this stage. Maybe it's that the thrill of the hunt is diminished by the abundance of ready-made collectibles. Perhaps it's because the movies now run on TV with such regularity, they have become mundane. During October, I found myself at a nice family theater in Orange county, California, introducing a showing of *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, and I relished the hours in that theater much more than I thought I would, considering the number of times I've seen the film. And that, I think, is what's missing. It's time to get back to basics. It's time to remember the elusive elements that endow these old classics with such appeal. I've found even myself guilty of over-dissecting the subject on occasion and putting more emphasis on analysis than simply enjoying everything for what it is. So, I'm committed now, more than ever, to re-embracing the magic and doing what I can to share it with all you old crimers and especially with all the little monsters. It's time to turn off the computers. It's time to take those "collectibles" out of their boxes (like we used to) and do the unthinkable—play with them! The first thing I'm going to do to reassert myself is take my copy of this issue when I get it, cut out the pictures I like and tape 'em to my wall where I can look at them! How about you? Are you ready to trade pack-rat for play-boy?

So far, we've survived the coming of 1984 and the Death Race of 2000. Now let's sing "Hail" aluiuh to the coming of 2001 with a heapiin' 'helpin' of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* #234—the original—and still the best!

Sincere-ly yours,

Ray FERRY
Publisher



We all know that carrying a name in a business as fickle and demanding as the movies can be a daunting endeavor. It takes fortitude, perseverance, talent, and more than a bit of good luck. And to travel that road and still keep a level head and both feet on the ground is no small accomplishment. So we dedicate this issue to **MICHELLE LINTEL**—along with a hearty "beast of luck" with her new series, "Black Scorpion."—RF

STANDARDS BEARER

I just got the special Collectors' Edition of *Famous Monsters* today and it was simply great. The cover of FM#12 redone by Arlis was terrific! He never ceases to amaze me—he's a real gem! I really like that FM is going about its business in spite of what's going on. I think all of you deserve a lot of credit for maintaining a classy magazine that more than outshines the competition, if you can call it that. I've seen those other publications and they just look cheap and awful. I will stand by FM and continue to buy it as long as you keep putting it out. I know a lot of FM fans who feel the same way. You guys are the best!

Carmine Barbarise
Via Internet Screemail

• We've got even more in store for the coming year: new departments, more filmbooks, expanded titles and new contests. Remember—we have not yet begun to fright!—John Paul Bones

MISSING IN ACTION?

I recently watched *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* on video and it saddened me to see that the bride was barely in the film. Why was that? Also I am aware it was James Whale's last horror film. What other films did he direct?

Albert Franco
Ontario, Canada

• If they remade *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* today, it's highly likely she would

be "bare-ly" in the film and you probably wouldn't be able to see it at your age! But BOF is really about the relationship between Dr. Pretorius and Henry Frankenstein. The bride herself was only a plot device to give them something to collaborate on, which is why she only shows up briefly at the end. Originally, Henry's wife, Elizabeth, figured more prominently in the story, but that subplot was cut before general release. We'll be discussing the film in detail in a future issue of FM.

Whale was a highly respected film director in the 1930s. His other Horror films included *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931) *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* (1932) and *THE INVISIBLE MAN* (1933). His last film was the musical, *SHOWBOAT*. He retired after that and passed away in the late 1950s.—RF

OH, BEHAVE!

I recently bought *Life Is But A Scream*, and I must say it's great that someone finally brought the old guard to task for the irresponsible and egotistical behavior over the years and had the goods to back it up. That bit about what happened with Robert Bloch just infuriated me! While your predecessor has done a lot for the genre, such behavior can't be excused. The new book is great and should be required reading for any FM fan!

Randy Schadel

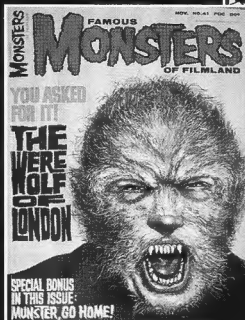
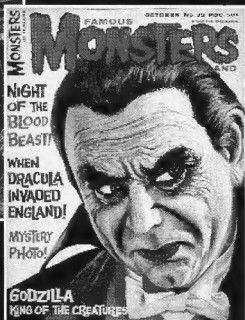
Via Internet Screemail

• It's regrettable things developed differently than I planned and that, as a result, my book had to cover both the sweet and the bitter. But, to quote Shelley: "Such an audience needs more than a pretty love story, so why shouldn't I write of monsters?"—RF

HOW SWEED IT IS!

I am from the Cleveland, Ohio area and I would like to tell you about a local tradition here. Every Friday night, for the past

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two years, we'd turn off our minds and turn on our TV for some harmless craziness at 11:30PM and watch our leader, "The Ghoul," host a "so bad it's good" fright flick. Ron Sweed is "The Ghoul" and he proudly waves FM at us with such enthusiasm that he not only gets us old ghouls restless, but he's turning on the little ghouls as well.

But here is our dilemma: The Ghoul has been moved to Sunday nights! No kids or adults are going to be able to enjoy his lunacy and insights in that time slot. The WB owned TV station is out of control, and we need some high voltage thunderbolts to bring their dead brains back to life. How can we, the fans, persuade such a huge affiliate to bring back our Friday funster?

Bryan Palacios
Amherst, OH

• We've been speaking regularly with The Ghoul over the last few months and will be doing a feature article on him in the near future. As for the time slot, you could you try and organize a local letter writing campaign with other fans to let the station know you'd like to see the show back at its old time slot, but a far more practical solution would be to set your timer, videotape the show and watch it at 11:30 on Fridays!—Ygor

PAINT FUNNY, MCGEE!

I just wanted to say how great the magazine is. My dad has been reading it since he was little and he hooked me onto it. *(Ouch!—That had to hurt.*

WANTED! MORE READERS LIKE



THE GHOUL! (Ron Sweed)

Watch those staples!—Ed.) I was wondering if you could give me a description of the Phantom of the Opera's costume? I just bought the model by Polar Lights and I was wondering how to paint it.

Joseph Barrett

Via Internet Screemail

• All of the Phantom's clothing is black except for his white blouse. The inner lining of the cape is popularly painted red, but the accepted standard for the era would have been gray. His skin is jaundiced (yellowish in color.) You'll get the best results by using matte paint (not enamel!). Lightly sand the seams where the pieces join before painting. And a little Bach organ music while you work will help get you in the mood!—Christine

FRENCH GHOST

Do you have any information regarding a very good PBS Great Performances version of Dracula with Louis Jourdan in the title role? I believe this version of Dracula originally aired around 1978. This was a very good original presentation filmed especially for PBS, and would be worth seeing once more as well as finding out if the program is available on video.

Terry L. Kostellic, Jr.
Gulfport, MS

• The Louis Jourdan version of "Dracula" is certainly one of the best ever made. The program is out on video. Try www.moviesunlimited.com to locate a copy.—Van Helsing

A "CD" UNDERTAKING

I am desperately trying to locate some monster CD's, especially one with Vincent Price titled "Witchcraft & Magic." I do not know the record label and no one has heard of it (having checked with Tower Records and other large chains.) Also, I'm looking for a couple Boris Karloff cd's, "Tales of the Frightened" and "Boris Karloff & His Friends."

David Elford
Vancouver, WA

• To our knowledge, none of the titles you mention have been released on CD, but vinyl copies of "An Evening with Boris Karloff and His Friends"

(Continued on page 8.....)

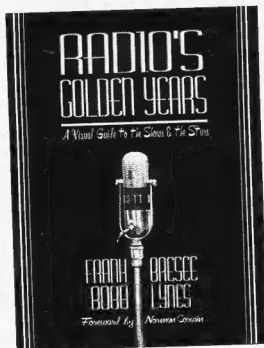
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(Continued
from page 7)

show up routinely on Ebay.com. (See FM #230 for a feature on the making of that album.) Keep looking and you'll probably find it. There have been CD copies of BK & His Friends offered on Ebay from time to time, but these are not authorized copies.—RF

MISSIVE OF THE MONTH

I purchased *Life is But a Scream!*, and I just wanted to tell you that I immensely enjoyed it! When your book was first published, I decided to pass on it because I thought that it was an exercise in self-aggrandizement. However, during a recent holiday in Los Angeles, I was at Hollywood Book & Poster Company where the book caught my attention. After cursorily thumbing through, I decided to acquire it as a present to myself. I am glad and delighted that I did! As I get older (I'm 45), I find that very few books can hold my interest, yet, after I began reading *LIBAS*, I found it so entralling and thrilling and your narrative style so arresting and engaging that I had great difficulty in putting down (in every sense of that expression) your powerfully dramatic exposé, which, I think, would make a dynamic movie! (*Me too! Any of you readers know a good producer?—Ed*). I therefore am compelled to applaud you and exult "Bravo!"

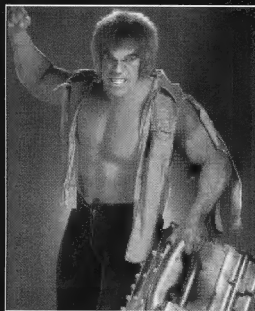
But lest I turn your head with too much praise, I must also confess that I am, by nature, a cynical and hard-boiled character who is not prone to accept "truths" at face value. That said, I am inclined to buy your P.O.V... Indeed, your "warts and all" anecdotes strengthened suspicions that I have long held.

Again, thank you for an absolutely riveting, marvelously entertaining and enlightening book.

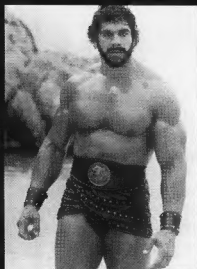
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Via Internet Screamall

• One of the most difficult aspects of growing up is realizing that things are not always as you thought when sheltered by the innocence of youth. But

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it's important to remember that even flawed heroes have their merit. No one is all good, or all bad, but some people will be seduced by the Harpies of adulation and ego can drive good men to tragic deeds—It's no accident that *Pride* is paramount among the Seven Deadly Sins. The story of the rebirth of *FM* is filled with warm and touching tales, unfortunately undermined by quirky personalities. But the one thing I've found to be the most amusing is that the loudest protests over *LIBAS* are coming from a select few who proclaim proudly that they haven't read it. Go figure!—RF

CAN'T CONTAIN HIMSELF

Welcome Back **FM**! I'm slamming my coffin lid and rattling my chains with horror-infested happiness! *FM* Forever! I dig you deeply!

"Monster Man" Dan Phillips
Via Internet Screemail

• Be careful not to wake the living, but don't cut off your noise to spite your case!—Count Alucard

PARKER PLACE

I very much liked the interview with Lara Parker in issue #232-3. What a classy lady! Your interview reminded me to pick up her book, *Angelique's Descent*. Keep up the good work!

Dan Jones
Elkhart, IN

• We're glad you're supporting Lara's effort. It is, after all, the "descent" thing to do!—RF

WELL WORTH IT

Just wanted to take the opportunity to commend you on your extremely delightful publication. I wish there was some way I could compliment you and thank you in a way no one else has so that you'd know how much I truly enjoy each and every issue of **FM**. From reading through the mail you publish each month, I know I'm not alone in not only relishing memories from childhood, but having the luxury of embracing the art, and glory of Gothic horror movies. I'm 36 years old, and I know you must wonder from time to time if it's all worth it. I just wanted to let you know that your efforts are indeed worth it, and you conduct yourself with the highest level of professionalism, which I truly respect.

You're a class act, Ray, and **Famous Monsters** clearly demonstrates that!

Dan Ruark

Via Internet Screemail

• After 40 years of enjoying the old Horror classics, I find it amusing I'm still every bit as much a fan as I ever was. It's been a bumpy road at times but, as Dr. Pretorius said: "We've come too far to stop now...nor can it be stopped so

(Continued on page 68.....)

PERSONALIZED GREETINGS FROM BEN CHAPMAN THE "REEL" GILL-MAN!

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VARIATIONS ON A SCREAM

**“shadow of the vampire” is as illusive
as nosferatu’s reflection**

SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE

General theatrical release: December 29, 3000
Lions Gate — Black and White/Color — 80
minutes

Directed by Elias Merhige
Produced by Jeff Levine
Screenplay by Steven Katz
Cinematographer: Lou Bouge
Makeup: Katja Reinert
Costumes: Caroline de Vivaise
Edited by: Chris Wyatt

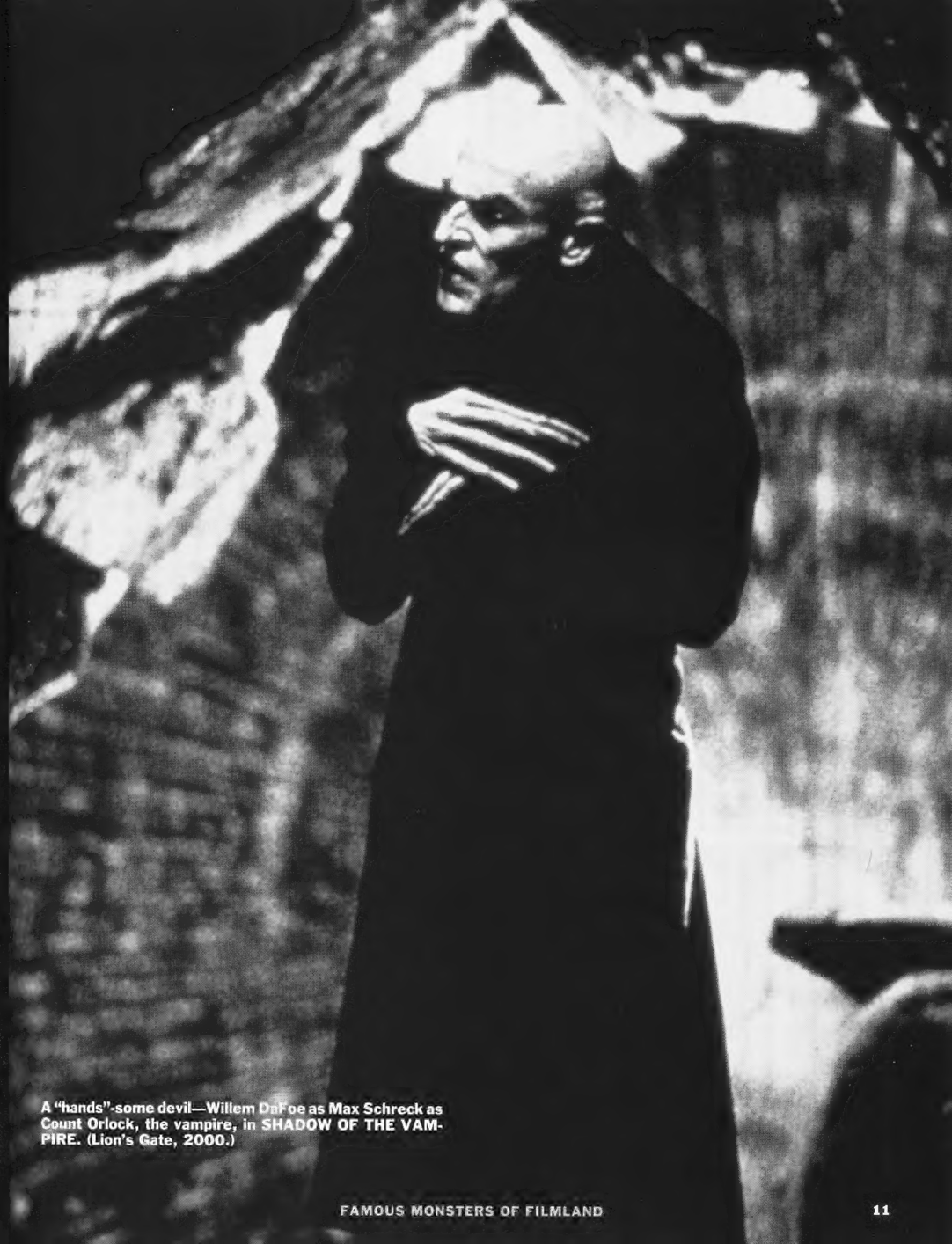
Principal Players:

John Malkovich, (F. W. Murnau), Willem DaFoe (Max Schreck), Udo Keir (Albin Grau, the film's producer), Catherine McCormack (Greta Schroeder, the leading lady), Eddie Izzard (Gustav Von Wangerheim, the leading man), John Aden Gillet (Henrick Galeen, the screewriter), Ronan Vibert (Wolfgang Muller, the first cameraman), Cary Elwes (the second cameraman)

shadow boxing

No one wanted *SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE* to be a good film more than I. With the rising interest in classic Horrorwood, partially fueled by last year's *GODS AND MONSTERS*, a successful film utilizing one of the greatest horror shows of the last century as its foundation could do wonders to spark added interest in our little coroner of the cinema among the general movie-going public. But, alas, I fear this film will serve more to alienate the uninitiated and leave them wondering just what we classic monster lovers find so interesting about films which are generally considered novel, but tired and old-fashioned.

Much as *GODS AND MONSTERS* had less to do with James Whale and used the legendary director's underground life-style as a platform to make strained comparisons to underlying social/political themes in *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, *SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE* might have done better if it used a fictional silent-era horror film as its backdrop rather than as well known and respected a filmmaker as F.W. Murnau. But perhaps of greater importance would be if the filmmakers had focused their visions as to just what point they were trying to make.



A “hands”-some devil—Willem DaFoe as Max Schreck as Count Orlock, the vampire, in *SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE*. (Lion's Gate, 2000.)



Schreck's climatic confrontation with Murnau.



Get the point? Director Elias Merhige (left) explains a scene to John Malkovich

Variations on a scream—Schreck puts the bite on cameraman Muller (Ronan Vibert), much the horrified dismay of director Murnau (Malkovich.) This joke tires quickly. (All fotos in this feature from **SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE**, Lions Gate, 2000.)



shadow of a doubt

SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE starts out with an intriguing premise:

What if Max Schreck, the mysterious, anonymous actor hired by famed director F.W. Murnau to play Graf Orlock, in *NOSFERATU*, were a real vampire? Naturally, scriptwriter Steve Katz had to take some liberties with this idea, most notably that by tradition—and key to this film's story—a vampire is limited to roaming around only at night. While altering this premise results in one of the film's strongest dramatic moments when Gustav (Eddie Izzard) has his first face-to-fiend encounter with Schreck in the dead of night at the Count's old castle ruins and displays real apprehension and fear while Murnau and company feverishly crank away to capture the moment on film, *cinema verite*, it also falls victim to the most notable faux pax: camera optics in 1919 were not very refined and film emulsions were very "slow" (needing a lot of light to expose an image), thus this particular scene (and many others in the original film) were shot outside "day-for-night" (the process of darkening down the exposure to make the daylight appear as if from the light on a bright moonlit night).

While a little artistic lie-sense is acceptable to make this particular premise work, the film, unfortunately, gets bogged down with a number of other, more fundamental, problems. Three short "silent-movie" type cards flashed on screen at the beginning of the film are all that establish the secretive conditions that Murnau was working under to make *NOSFERATU*. The film presupposes that the audience is already familiar with the legal challenge mounted against the filmmaker by *Dracula* author Bram Stoker's widow. The result is that several of Murnau's dialogue references to secrecy seem curious, if not actually confusing, if you don't already know what's going on.

curiosity killed the katz

Director Elias Merhige explained that a number of script elements were dropped as he delved more into how he wanted the picture to develop. In a recent interview, Katz informed FM that many scenes that helped establish the plot were cut from the final release. Moreover, he said, an entire subplot had been cut. The original script contained a major undertaking in which a female vampire had a centuries-old encounter with Schreck, resulting in his also becoming one of the "undead." Schreck eventually discovers that the woman is still alive (vampires are immortal, remember) and accepts his role in Murnau's film to chance an eventual rejoining and confrontation with her.

Even though cut, remnants of this plot element still permeate the film. Perhaps the single most moving scene in the film takes place late one night at the castle when Schreck joins two members of Murnau's staff, who are busy passing the time with a bottle of schnapps. Schreck samples the liquor, but declines any more when a bat comes flying by. He snatches the creature from flight and rips the head off to devour its blood in a manner that suggests both animal need and human (or inhuman) disgust at its own bloodlust. (To the director's credit, the graphics of this attack are down-played in shadow—suggested rather than depicted.) The conversation drifts to a discussion of Bram Stoker's novel.

"Do you know what is the most tragic part of the story of *Dracula*?" Schreck asks his uneasy companions. "Here is this



The art direction influence of **THE EXORCIST** permeates this production still from **SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE**.

nobleman...a man of position who once had scores of servants in his household to tend to his affairs and now, centuries later, he is alone and he must discover how to properly entertain his house guest. He must learn how to make a proper bed...how to set a fine table..." It is a vantage point rarely, if ever, addressed in a vampire film. It suggests, in a quiet but very emotional tone, the tragedy of the vampire—that even as he has attained immortality, he laments the loss of his humanity; his dignity.

"I wanted to make people feel a sense of sorrow, a sense of lament for this vampire," Mehri said. How much more powerful a moment it might have been if the subplot explaining how Schreck was infected with vampirism were left intact in the film!

dialogue is self-aware

Mehri clings tight to the notion that Murnau has to keep a close watch on his star in order to prevent him from killing off the crew before the film is finished. In one particularly amusing, but ironically telling scene, Schreck argues with Murnau over who in the crew is the most expendable to satisfy the vampire's craving at a crucial juncture in the filming.

"They're all important," yells Murnau. "I need them all!"

"What about the scriptwriter?," suggest Schreck. "You don't really need him anymore, do you?"

"Oh, all right," Murnau says in a resigned tone, "I guess I can do without the scriptwriter."

Oh—how wrong he can be! If this film needs *any* member of

the team in critical proportions, it's the scriptwriter! (I'm reminded of Curt Siodmak's observation that the best of the films he wrote were the ones that were provided on such short schedules and tight budgets, that the front office didn't have time to read them first and thus "improve" his work.)

tooth or consequences

When left alone to interpret the character, Willem DaFoe turns in a performance that is at one intriguing and amusing, but his inexplicable penchant for standing around always with hands overlapped and held to his chest (see photo on page 11) tends to draw attention to itself after a while simply because of its repetition. One wonders if the classic pose of the real Max Schreck from *NOSFERATU* was the only historical reference available for the character. DaFoe seems much older and world weary in his makeup than did Schreck, but the most unusual treatment is that given to the vampire's fangs. In the 1979 remake, Klaus Kinski wore a pair of fangs so pointed and elongated they appeared more as pointed needles. Such protruding fangs would have played havoc with a vampire's lower lip. But for DaFoe's makeup, these fangs more resemble buckteeth—a sort of Bugs Bunny for the horror set. They are broad, flat-tipped and oversized. Every vampire save Lugosi could have benefited greatly from a Transylvanian orthodontist, but the treatment given DaFoe is a cross between Billy-Bob and Milton Berle.



(Above) DeFoe and Eddie Izzard recreate a scene from *NOSFERATU*. (Center) Izzard prepares to meet Max Schreck for the first time as the camera role. (Where the gasoline-powered generators to run arc lights on location in "1919" came from is anybody's guess.)



Schreck puts the bite on Greta. Unfortunately, this still foto has more action in it than most of Ms. McCormack's entire part in the film.



the bite stuff

"I was always fascinated by the whole era German expressionist cinema, World War I and how it led to the spiritual decline of Europe but led to some great art," Mehri said. "It was important to me to make the camera a player in the film, to make it a vampire itself," he continued. "As it focuses in, it takes the flesh and blood out away from its subjects and reduces it to this shadow that is immortal." His comments suggest more understanding and empathy towards his subject than is evident in the final film. In fairness, we can't affix blame to any one person for this film's shortcomings. It seems a fair guess that this was a highly prized subject for everyone involved, so whether it fell victim to outside commercial meddling to try and make it what it could not be, or if the filmmakers simply "bit" into more than they could chew is unclear. My personal take would be that an enthusiastic group tackled subject matter beyond their current level of competency, but that, fortunately, can be corrected as age and experience set in.

From what is known, Katz's original script held the promise of an intriguing character drama but what finally makes it to the screen is better suited to a half-hour TV show or, better yet, an eight-minute comedy sketch. General vampire fans—particularly those weaned on the Chris Lee Dracula of Hammer Films fame, or the other, bloody, more contemporary yarns—will be left disappointed because none of those traditional and expected staples of the vampire film are anywhere to be found. Fans of the silents and of Murnau especially will be disappointed that the potentially ripe script idea has been whittled down to—you'll pardon the pun—a "shadow" of what it might have been.

Even with its historical and plot deficiencies, *SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE* might have become a weird black comedy in the hands of someone more adept at expanding on the visions of Andy Warhol, but in this case the film's greatest challenge is trying to justify its existence. It goes nowhere and will put the average fan to sleep long before its anticlimax.

an offer you can't refuse...

Now that we've given you the nitty-gritty critique that you, as true-blue, died-in-the-wool classic monster fans, need and deserve, let me make a recommendation to you: Go and see the film! If that seems a contradictory suggestion, consider that the filmmakers meant well. They took a difficult subject and tried to make it entertaining to a general audience. They did succeed in evoking the aura of a unique and colorful era in Horrorwood history and the behind-the-scenes aspects of the film are authentic enough (they used actual antique silent movie-era cameras on screen) to intrigue horror fans.

But perhaps the single most compelling reason to see and support this film is that, while it is a far cry from what we think it could have been, it's success, even a modest one, will likely encourage other films dealing with the classics to be made, or may—dare I say it?—Even encourage the theatrical re-release of more of the originals! After all, today's Hollywood is an altogether different place than it was during the Ghoulden Age, and the Wall Street attitude that dictates what will or won't be made is quite hostile towards films of substance and good old-fashioned drama—films without all the bloodletting and gore that dominate today's market. 🦇



(Above) Bucky, the vampire player. Willem DaFoe really sank his teeth into the dramatic aspects of his role—quite a feat considering the obviously glued-on nails and buck teeth used by makeup. (Below) Crews control—the SOTV team did manage a faithful recreation of the look of 1919 filmmakers, right down to the ties and lab coats.



Ay, car-umba! Darcy Walker aka the Black Scorpion with her own set of hot wheels—the Scorpionmobile! (Next page) Michelle Lintel. ("Black Scorpion," New Concorde, 2000. All fotos in this feature ©2000 by New Concorde.)



IT DON'T MEAN A THING IF IT AIN'T GOT THAT STING!

**black scorpion's
michelle lintel
talks about life as
a superheroine
in an age of comic
book capers**

read on!





Photographer Cameron Albright (Alan Scotti) aka archvillain, Flashpoint, undergoes in a little sci-fi in surgery.

Getting a new series—especially a fantasy/sci-fi themed series—off the ground is a formidable task for even the most experienced performers, and to take on a new character being developed under the guiding hand of as prolific a producer as Roger Corman can be downright nerve-wracking. But newcomer Michelle Lintel realized quickly that she's "not in Kansas anymore" and stepped boot-first into the competitive world of superheroine hijinks with a freshness and determination that is sure to win her a solid audience.

Upon meeting her in person, she seems shy—even frail—yet always personable and eager to please. Her Midwest upbringing shines through and one is quietly reminded of a young Mary Tyler Moore—fresh, buoyant and possessing that rare quality of innocence spiced with strength of character. She seems the type of girl who could believably harbor a secret alter-ego that would surface in a tight spot, if only to prove she can be as formidable an adversary as she can be a lady.

Roger Corman's new series, "Black Scorpion," premieres on the Sci-Fi channel in January, 2001 and boasts a prestigious alumni of super-villains culled from some of the most popular and enduring fantasy shows of all time—Adam "Batman" West, Frank "Riddler" Gorshin, Lou "The Incredible Hulk" Ferrigno—even comic legend Soupy Sales!

We met up with Michelle and series producer, Craig Nevius, at the Petersen Car Museum, for the festivities marking the donation of the Scorpionmobile to the museum's TV cars collection. Next issue we'll feature the series' hot new makeup artist, Robert Hall.—RF

small town girl

RF: Why don't we just start with some basics about your background?

ML: Well, I was born in Kansas, in a town of 2,000 people and was raised on a ranch. Later we moved to a bigger town of about 80,000 and that seemed huge for me. I went to High School there and eventually went to Kansas City where I graduated from high school. I went to college at San Diego State, majored in psychology, graduated there and was modeling to work my way through. I was driving to L.A. a lot, so it seemed to make sense that I would move up here. I did a lot of commercials and my manager introduced me to a photographer who said—

RF: "Hey baby, I can get you in the movies..."

ML: Exactly! I hadn't thought really about becoming an actress, but I'd tackled modeling so when the opportunity came along I said to myself, "I don't know what I'm doing", but, hell, I'm gonna give it a try!" They hadn't been able to find the girl they were looking for, and I was turned away on my first audition. But I did get a call back as one of the final five contenders. The room was full of people and I was terrified. I had to do both characters, and my co-star, Scott Valentine, was reading with me, just to get the chemistry of the character. He had the script in his hand and I had to do some martial arts things, so I kicked the papers out of his hand; not on purpose—I know that the producers thought I did it on purpose, but it was all an accident, it all just happened. They called me about three hours later and said, "Hey, you got it!" And I said, "Wait! This is Michelle. This

is Michelle, right?" And they said, "You got the part!" I couldn't believe it.

My manager called me and he kept saying, "I don't believe it! I've been in this business twenty years and you walk in this town with no resume to speak of and look at you! I've never heard of this—it's crazy!" And I said, "Why? We're not in Kansas anymore!" I think I felt a little like Dorothy but I wasn't about to let those red slippers get the better of me!

justice "just is..."

RF: Since much of what you would watch growing up would have been the Schwarzenegger films—that sort of action hero thing—and not so much the 50s and 60s type of pop culture most of us older fans remember, how did you resolve the two sides of a character that must have been new to you in your own mind?

ML: The real thing about Black Scorpion wasn't about being a bitch, it was about being a strong character. Playing Darcy was about being more realistic, more approachable—someone that you would see on the street and want to talk to. Not the Black Scorpion, obviously. But within myself and maybe in everyone, there's a side where they can put up that if they need to—especially women. The Black Scorpion is from a different world. It's that dark part that I think we all have. She really got fed up with the justice system as we all do, and there are people out there that take the law into their own hands, so that idea allowed me to bring out a basic anger and focus it.

RF: The thing that made "Batman" a success is that you can take out all the comic angles in an episode, take all the *Pows* and the *Bams* on the screen, take away all the gadgets, and Adam West still had such an intensity of purpose that people couldn't help but gravitate to him. There were certain aspects of the characters that elevated the shows beyond mere confrontation. Gorshin played the Riddler and Adam played Batman as two adversaries that respect each other and yet they're against each other. Were you nervous about working with these people since you were sort of following in their footsteps?

ML: It was a great experience! Adam was very helpful to me and he always made me feel like a star. He gave me the same respect I think he had been shown on his show—when he played Batman. Even when we appeared together for all the publicity shoots, he always pushed me to the forefront—like at your *Famous Monsters* Halloween party when he and I and some of the girls all posed together—he's just been a great friend.

RF: That's Adam, all right. He's not only a consummate actor, he's a consummate gentleman. There's none of that stuffy "star" attitude. I think he really enjoys people.

ML: And Frank Gorshin was really funny to be around!

working in a "tights" spot

RF: Did you have much time to prepare before the series started shooting?

ML: My head was spinning. I saw (the movies) *BLACK SCORPION I & II* and I thought, "Oh, that costume—that's going to be a trip." Unlike the movies, this time they wanted to use a more industrial looking costume so they made it from patent leather. I went into the body cast and they did the mask, but, God, they moved fast! I mean, I did the audition, then the next day, I flew to Phoenix. I got the job and I was on a plane



Hell hath no fury like a woman stormed—Athena Massey plays villainess, "Hurricane."



"Now, what do we mean by dat?"—Soupy Sales appears as Professor Prophet. That's sidekick Playmate Carrie Stevens by his side. (It sure as heck isn't Rebbi!) (Below) Michele applies a little elbow grease to Slapshot's head (Greg Keane.)





Lou "The Incredible Hulk" Ferrigno puts some muscle into his role as "The Slavemaster." (Below) Beauty and the beast!



back with a day. I was fitted for the costume and then, like a week later, they started shooting. I was given the shots for each episode as we went along but I didn't have all the scripts because they were still being developed. It all moved so fast!

RF: Were you shooting multiple scripts at one time or did you do one complete script?

ML: One complete script—six days to do sixty pages. And we cranked! I was working 14 and 15 hour days sometimes. First unit, second unit, third unit, fifth unit—you get the idea. To shoot a movie is one thing, but to shoot 23 episodes of a series that's three months down the road, you're always looking for the light. I'm on the set every day, I'm written into about 80% of the script, I'm learning dialogue. I'm reading the script on Sundays and shooting Monday through Friday night. I would get a breather on Saturday and start reading scripts for the next week on Sunday again. But the crew was great, the cast was great, and I'm not just saying that—everyone worked really hard.

some sting in the way she moves

RF: Adam West would always talk about the peculiar problems of wearing the tights and cowl he had for Batman—particularly having such limited field of vision with the mask. Did the costume you wore present any problems?

ML: It wasn't exactly easy to move in and actually, my legs had more weight on them than anything. I was carrying a lot of weight in the boots and being that tall in them and doing round house moves and crescent moves in that kind of gear was rough. You can't bend as much as you'd like to. And the costume was all in pieces—they were buckling all these separate pieces on me and zipping and lacing, so if it had all been one piece it might have been easier. Doing the fight stuff in the costume was the challenge. The suit was hot and it was tricky working in those boots—those 5-inch heels—trying to balance yourself, but you get that down after awhile. I never broke anything or sprained anything, thank god. Somebody said that after you do so many episodes you don't feel it any more. I had few problems with the physical stuff—it was probably the easiest part. I had a great stunt girl on the set, but really took it upon myself to do many of my own stunts and I liked doing it myself instead of having someone else doing it—the whole process was a major experience for me.

RF: You mentioned crashing through windows and doing flips and tumbles. I'm surprised they'd risk that.

ML: I didn't jump off buildings, you know. I took falls but no flips and no high building jumps. Something could have happened. I would have tried anything they would let me, but they stopped me at certain points.

frank talk

RF: You mentioned earlier that you didn't have much time for fooling around during filming because the schedule was so tight, but you said something about setting up one of your cast for a gag.

ML: Oh, yes! Craig can tell you about that one!

CN: One of the guys on the staff—a guy named Frank—was given a small part on one of the shows. It was his first acting gig—two lines. He was really nervous because his lines are to the star of the show but, even though Michelle was really sweet and nice to everybody, he was so nervous because he had been



The wrong arm of the law—(Left) Adam “Batman” West appears as “Breathtaker” in five episodes of the “Black Scorpion” series. (Right) The one and only Riddler, Frank Gorshin, appears as “Clockwise,” assisted by Victoria Silvstedt as “Hourglass.”

hearing “Michelle’s tired, she’s in a bad mood. She just wants to rest, she wants to finish,” so before the take, we told Frank that we’re changing one of his lines from “That’s a fine specimen” to “Oh, that’s a fine slab of meat.” Anyway, Frank went in, cameras rolling, and everybody was in on this except him. So Michele was in shackles because the script was a ‘virtual reality’ episode, and she looked like she just wanted to get the shot done and break. So Frank did the lines and Michele snaps back with “What! What did you just say! That’s all! Somebody get me out of these!” and she just ranted and raved and poor Frank was turning every shade of white you could think of. He’s just standing there shaking and mortified. When they uncoupled Michele, she glared at him and just stormed off the set! Then she came back a few minutes later, after it had sunk in, and gave Frank a big hug and he laughed a sigh of release. After it was all over, we let him redo the scene.

stingin’ in the rain

RF: Since this is a Roger Corman production, did you experience any of the legendary “make it work no matter what happens” things that Corman films are famous for?

CN: The last night of the first week—shooting the first episode—there’s a fight that’s supposed to be on the top of a dam, which is really a 30-foot high mock-up on the Concord back lot. Michelle’s up there along with Medusa and Scott Valentine, the male lead, and these two huge

bodybuilders as the henchmen. We start to shoot the fight and, all of a sudden, a thunderstorm comes out of nowhere and a torrential rain comes pouring down. Camera equipment began sparking, lights were sparking, and the actors couldn’t climb down because it was too wet, too slippery and too dangerous. So they’re all stuck up there in that downpour and we just said, “Keep filming! Keep filming! We’ll figure out how to match the rain later!” Roger would have been proud of us!

sting low, sweet chariot

RF: Is there anything you brought to your character that made Black Scorpion uniquely female—a character that could be not possibly be played by a man?

ML: I believe strongly in female intuition. I believe a man couldn’t play this character because its instinctual on a woman’s part and a lot her character is going on her instincts. Darcy puts things together in her mind—that’s how she solves a lot of the problems. Not that a man couldn’t do that, but I think a woman can really zone in on intangibles and be ten steps ahead of a man.

RF: If you had to single out one aspect of playing Black Scorpion that appealed to you the most as a woman, what would it be?

ML: Are you kidding? Driving the Scorpionmobile! I drove that car as much as I could! That’s MY car!

“Black Scorpion” airs on the Sci-Fi channel Friday nights beginning in January. Check your local listings for time.

THE LITTLE GIANT OF HORRORWOOD

**fm bids a fond
farewell to
curt siodmak—
father of the
wolf man!**

star light, star bright

One evening during this past September, I was sitting outside and happened to glance up at the brilliant full moon that was beaming its light gently over the pool and twinkling among the leaves of the two royal palm trees that line the yard. It was a sight I'd enjoyed on many warm nights over the last several years, but on this night, something seemed amiss. The face of the man in the moon looked rather curious—perplexed might be a better word—as if he were looking down and not quite sure what to make of everything going on below. Most curious, though, was that, instead of the nondescript “face” I’d always seen, I couldn’t shake the feeling that on this night, it bore a distinct resemblance to Curt Siodmak. It’s only my imagination, I thought, because as I was looking up at that bright white orb, I was thinking about an article Curt had sent me a few weeks before that I was preparing for an upcoming issue of FM. The next day I received the sad news that Curt had passed away. He was 98 years old and





Larry Talbot and Maleva pay their last respects. (Maria Ouspenskaya, Lon Chaney Jr., *THE WOLF MAN*, Universal, 1941.)

was working at his life's passion right up to the end.

A lot of people will be writing a lot of words about Curt over the next months. About his influence in horror films; about his contributions to the writer's art; about his insights into science and science fiction; about his accomplishments and his failings. Most of the words people will write will be deserving, fitting, perhaps even profound. We'll read more about Curt in the next several months than we have in the last several years. There's nothing like death to get the journalists to pay attention. But many of the dissertations will have one basic thing in common—they'll essentially be exercises for the writers to parade their particular brand of insight about a man they really know so little about. You know the ones—the "analysts" who will debate the hidden psychosexual meaning of *THE WOLF MAN*, the subversive references interwoven in *DONOVAN'S BRAIN*, the Oedipal undercurrents of *THE TRANSATLANTIC TUNNEL*, or the subliminal metaphor of the flat-top platform in *FP1 DOES NOT REPLY*. Of course, here at *FM*, Curt has always been a seminal figure and we'll continue to write about him and his work (without the pseudo-intellectual Freudian subtexts) as we've been doing for years, so—even though this towering talent has moved on, and traditionally this magazine would run a retrospective obituary—I don't want to ramble on now about the greatness of the man or his legacy. Rather, I want to talk to you about someone else I don't usually have the chance to talk about here...someone I think is of far more importance. I want

to tell you about my *friend*, Curt.

science friction

I'd first met him in 1991 when we were making the "Amazing Worlds of Science Fiction and Fantasy" video. In the years that followed, I saw him often and would take him and Henrietta out to dinner when they were in town or go up to visit them at the ranch in Three Rivers. Those visits were some of my fondest times with him. The house was quaint, with a lot of eclectic knickknacks all around. On several places on the walls hung marvelous artwork that Henrietta had done. You could sense this was a happy home populated by a very happy, very devoted couple. 75 years they were married! Curt kept a small office off the living room where he would continue to write. He had an impressive computer setup but, not surprisingly, the man who had dreamed up so many sci-fi innovations had little patience to learn how to use all the high-tech gadgets that were now at his disposal. He preferred his typewriter. By 1998, his eyesight was failing and he had a huge monitor and a microfiche-type magnifier next to it. He would take his faxes or letters and place them on the machine so the type could be enlarged to aid his reading. The magnification factor was so high that little more than two words at a time could be read on the screen.

Curt always shied away from talking about his films when we spoke. He was always more interested in talking about what he



Think tank—Peter Van Eyck as Prof. Corry and Bernard “M” Lee as Dr. Frank Shears in *THE BRAIN* (CCC Filmkunst/Stross, 1962), one of the numerous retellings of Curt’s novel, “Donovan’s Brain.”

wanted to do next, rather what had been done decades before. He would always tell me he was an author, not a writer, explaining that an author creates ideas while writing is more or less a craft. Each time I would visit, he would take me in the back room and pull down a number of his books. A favorite ritual was to show me a first edition copy of his 1930 novel, *FP1 Does Not Reply*, and point out the design illustrations he’d created for such fanciful things as radar and the design of the modern aircraft carrier. Curt was both proud at having thought of them and frustrated at not having received recognition for imagining them years before they were “invented.”

a man of letters

He had donated much of his collection of letters and memorabilia related to his career to a museum in Germany, but he kept three distinctive letters framed on the wall of his study. One was a 1937 letter from a former German publisher informing him that the Nazi regime had confiscated all copies of Siodmak’s books in print as an affront to the people. Next to it, he had framed a 1992 letter from the president of the Federal Republic of Germany proclaiming him a national treasure. He was always amused by the dichotomy of those two documents. “I owe everything to America,” he would tell me. “The only country that said to a Jewish refugee, ‘welcome!’ when other countries said ‘get out.’” The third was a hand-crafted 1981 award from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences given to the

late Orson Welles, honoring him for his magnificent spoken-word recording of *Donovan’s Brain*. “They don’t give the author an award,” Curt said. “They don’t even mention my name here! The actor gets all the credit, the author is ignored.”

That paradox of the creative world loomed large in his legend, especially about the Wolf Man. “I am the Wolf Man,” he would say. “My life was a classic case of *hermatia* (the Greek concept of dispassionate gods dealing out fate and causing men to suffer even though they had nothing to do with their lot in life). “I would not have chosen to be a Jew in 1930s’ Germany, but that was my fate,” he often told me. I’d asked him on numerous occasions about the lasting appeal of *THE WOLF MAN*, and his ambivalence about Lon Chaney Jr. would invariably surface. “Do you know why Chaney was so good at playing the character?” he would ask me. “Because the relationship Talbot had with his father was exactly the relationship Chaney had with the old man (Lon Chaney Sr.). Chaney was playing himself in the film. He was acting out the frustrations he had with his own father,” Curt said.

always the entrepreneur

He was hurt that he never saw a dime from all the merchandising that his character had spawned. I don’t think he really cared about the money since he was comfortable in his years, but being ignored bothered him a lot. He wasn’t even invited to the festivities at Universal Studios the day the first issue of the

classic movie monster stamps were released. But Curt was enterprising all the way. He had gone out and bought up over 1000 sets of the stamps at the Three Rivers post office and used his own money to print a small booklet honoring the five authors of the classic stories the monsters were based on, added a copy of his original screenplay for *THE WOLF MAN*, affixed the stamp sheet to a backing card which he autographed by hand, and wrapped the whole package in a color folder commemorating Three Rivers as the home of the Wolf Man. He called and asked me to help him sell these unique commemoratives and I ran a series of ads for them in *FM* magazine for several issues. Those lucky fans who got one of the limited series sets have a unique collectors' item I would hope they would pass on to their kids instead of selling on Ebay. We won't see the likes of Curt again.

Around the time I was working on "The Pentagram Papers" feature for *FM*, I tried to explain to Curt how we could market his stamp sets to a wider market, but he was feisty and, while he wanted me to help him as best I could, at the same time, he would become indignant and say why should he be bothered with having to sell the sets when he was snubbed when the stamps were first issued? I remember vividly as I tried to explain things to him, he snapped at me saying, "you're just like my brother, Robert! Always have to be the director!" Henrietta later told me that, in Curt's own way, that was quite a compliment. He'd always had a love/hate relationship with his brother. Curt had always been an integral part of the pictures they worked on together, but Robert, the flamboyant director, seemed to get most of the attention. Curt's attempt to direct "The Tales of Frankenstein" for television in the 1950s was actually his way of trying to stand up to his late brother's legacy and prove himself just as capable. Of course, Curt's legacy was secure and he didn't have to prove anything, but one can imagine the emotional ties and the rivalry between these two men. Curt admired such dominant personality traits, even as he was frustrated in thinking he should battle them. For myself, especially after he compared me to Robert and I appreciated the significance of the relationship, I think that sibling rivalry may have been a strong asset to Curt in crafting his best literary work.

the end of the wolf man

When the idea for "The Pentagram Papers" was being developed, I'd asked Curt if he would write this final, untold chapter in the saga of Larry Talbot. At that time, he didn't feel up to the project, so I had many intimate conversations with him about how he felt about the character and why he thought Talbot had achieved such popularity. It was his thoughts and advice that were the basis for how the story in *FM* was developed. It remains one of my proudest efforts and the fact that Curt called to express his own satisfaction with the story when he read it is among my proudest compliments for the magazine.

One afternoon while we were visiting, I asked him if he would write some articles or floating column on horror films for the magazine, since he didn't want to try and take on a full story. I was naturally disappointed when he "bah-humbed" the idea, until Henrietta took me aside and said, "Don't you see he really wants to write the articles? Writing is his life's work and he doesn't want to stop. He shouldn't stop because it keeps him going. Pester him—make him write for you." I left that day with Curt emphatic he would not write any articles, but a few weeks



Yvonne deCarlo—the future Lilly—Mrs. Herman Munster—as she appeared in Siodmak's *CRISS CROSS* (Universal, 1948.) Stunning, isn't she?

In the fledgling days of space travel, William Luddigan was among the first to venture into the great beyond, courtesy of the sci-fi imagination of Curt Siodmak, in *RIDERS TO THE STARS* (United Artists, 1954). Luddigan would later continue his space explorations as Col. McCauley on the innovative "Men Into Space" TV series in 1959.





Curt said he always liked to put a funny line in his scripts to force the studios to read them before they started shooting. Here, Larry Talbot tells the Frankenstein monster that when the moon is full, he turns into a werewolf. "Are you kidding?" was the monster's reply! Of course, this exchange was tossed out when Lon Chaney Jr. read it in the script. (Bela Lugosi, Lon Chaney Jr., **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN**, Universal, 1943.)

Curt tried his hand at directing "**Tales of Frankenstein**," a proposed TV series for Screen Gems/Hammer Films in 1958. That's Don Megowan as the monster.



later I received a package from him with a new article he'd written for **FM** about the psychology of horror films, which we published in **FM** #224 as the wrap-up to "The Pentagon Papers."

In 1998, Curt self-published 400 copies of his autobiography *Even A man Who is Pure In Heart*, which we helped him sell through the magazine. (The book is scheduled for re-release by another book publisher next year, so any of our readers who got one of the autographed, limited first edition copies through **FM** have a real treasure.) Because of my schedule, it took me several weeks to finish reading his book. Curt would call me every few days and ask me if I'd finished it and what my favorite anecdote was. "Tell me what stands out for you, and I'll tell you something about yourself," he would say. "Everyone who reads a book reads to find themselves in it. No one cares about what happened to the author. A good book is a book that makes the reader see himself in it. We're all self-centered," he said. I recall that during the first few times he asked me about the book and I'd told him I hadn't finished it yet, he remarked, "You know, Ray, it takes an author three years to write a book, but it takes a lifetime for someone to read it!"

a day of wine and roses

When we went up to visit at the ranch, we usually only stayed a few hours because it was a four-hour drive each way. But on the day that would turn out to be the last day we would visit, we stayed for supper. We'd brought some flowers for Henrietta and a few bottles of different wines with us, not knowing what was to be served. "Always have a good wine," Curt said. While Curt and Henrietta had a wonderful housekeeper to look out for them, we were a little surprised to find Curt in the kitchen cooking dinner that afternoon. He showed us where the plates and dinnerware were kept and a lovely table with fresh flowers from the garden and the basket we'd brought was set. After a delightful salad, Curt brought out a succulent roast beef he had marinated and cooked himself. The wines were opened and we feasted on one of the most delicate meats I've ever had, matching the cuisine in the finest restaurant. He was quite a cook! We chatted about different things and then turned to the subject of his autobiography. One of the reasons for our visit that day was to pick up a supply of his books because I'd sold a significant number of them for him at his request only to discover when we got there he'd miscounted and only had about 30 copies left! Well, that put aside any thought of distributing them at least until a reprint could be arranged, so we discussed the book for a while.

I recall two stories in it that struck me in particular. One was his story about having been an undercover operative for the Allies during the second world war and his clandestine exploits with a lady counter spy—a tale I was sure must have been a put-on until he told me it actually happened! The other was about the wild parties he and Henrietta used to throw at their home for Hollywood royalty on weekends—Charles Laughton, Yvonne deCarlo, Ava Gardner. When I asked him about those times, he told me he really hated those parties and having all the people around. Then Henrietta, God bless her, looked up from her plate and said, "Sure you hated them, Curt. That's why you used to come home from the studio and put on your fancy smoking jacket and spend all that time packing and lighting that pipe of yours in front of the guests! You loved all that attention; tell him



Black Tooth? The Shenannighoul? No! It CURUCU, BEAST OF THE AMAZON, in a paws with Beverly Garland (Universal/International, 1956).

Louise Albritton and Lon Chaney Jr. from SON OF DRACULA (Universal, 1943). Curt had written the screenplay but brother Robert had him removed from the picture to avoid confrontation during production.



tain sunset, and I watched his face with an intent gaze, I realized he wasn't lamenting. I'm only 48 years old, but even at my young age, I'm just starting to come to appreciate what is really important in life. At 98 years old, after having watched the world go from horse-drawn carriages to space shuttles, having seen his futuristic aircraft platform evolve to a base on the moon, having had a family and a loving wife of three quarters of the century, Curt knew what was important in life and I'll always be grateful to him for letting me in on it that night.

sweet screams are made of these

I last spoke to Curt two months before he passed away. We were still talking about promoting his book and discussing photographs to accompany the newest article he had sent me expressing his thoughts on the movies that had catapulted him to fame. We were supposed to make the trip up to the ranch in a few weeks but, as often happens, life got in the way and we didn't get the opportunity to see him again.

But the one thing I distinctly remember most about Curt was his inner peace. For the longest time I thought it was a distinction that came from having lived to such senior years and I'm sure that has something to do with it, but the longer I knew him, the more I came to think it was inherent in him. He seemed to take life in his stride and, no matter how frustrated he may have become over whatever new project was occupying his time, he always seemed to be just slightly distant from everything and quietly amused that he should really be doing anything at all. I thought he was, in some small fashion, trying to emulate those same gods of fate that he always told me watched over mankind and twisted the rules to give each person's life its own, unique irony. Just like the mythological gods he drew upon to twist the road Lawrence Talbot would walk, I think Curt liked to fancy himself in their mythical company as he watched his own life go through its daily paces. He seemed always content, even when things weren't going the way he wanted.

That was the man I remember—that was my friend, Curt. I will surely miss those lazy Sunday visits, but as he gave eternal life to so many diverse characters we've all grown to know and love, Curt will live on in these pages and in the hearts and minds of all those who knew him and those who knew him though his timeless work. And if there is a place out there in the great beyond where the departed can keep a watchful eye on this crazy little rock we call Earth, then I have no doubt that Curt is observing, and he's probably amused by finally seeing the big picture.

Last night I went out again to gaze once more at that big bright, full moon before it took its leave for the month, and amused myself by reciting Maleva's immortal poem. When I'd finished, I thought I saw Curt's face prominent upon the surface again. Maybe it was just the way the small, swirling trail of a night cloud looked as it passed over the face I saw, but I could swear he was grinning at me... 🍀

In a future issue, we'll present the entire trans-crypt of the 1991 interview we recorded with Curt when we were making our "Amazing Worlds of Science Fiction and Fantasy" video. We'll also publish Curt's last professional article which he sent to me just a few short weeks before he passed away. I think you'll find them enlightening and fascinating reading.—RF



"When I said I wanted a few belts before lunch, this isn't what I had in mind," says Frankenstein's monster in the last Siodmak-written Frankenstein/Wolf Man film, and the first to feature big, burly Glenn Strange. (HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN, Universal, 1944.) Note director Erle C. Kenton's shadow in the upper left of the foto.

SPEAK SOFTLY AND CARRY A BIG SCHTIK!

**entertainment impresario,
steve allen, talks about why we laugh
at horror in this exclusive interview
for famous monsters!**

Did you ever wonder where the popular TV image of the stomping, lumbering, not-too-bright monster came from? Or where the exaggerated "I want to bite your neck!" parody of Dracula originated? Or how the swinging arm, dragging leg, extremely hunched over lab assistant, popularly referred to in most every TV comedy sketch as Igor began? The answers will surprise you. They all have their origins in the fertile imagination of one of television's most versatile and respected personalities—Steve Allen.

For as ingrained in our culture as is television, so is the name of Steve Allen. No other personality has done more to develop and push the medium.

Steve Allen was many things. He's the originator of the "man on the street" interview, where he would often find himself at the mercy of the strange opinions of funnyman Bill Dana. He was the serious newscaster who punctuated breaking stories—not with the sound of a ticker tape as did the legendary Walter Winchell—but by squeezing a horn and saying "smock! smock!" in a high pitched squeaky voice. He's the pop music impresario host who dressed rising singing sensation Elvis Presley in a formal tux while singing his hit song, "Hound Dog" to a live basset hound also clad in top hat and tie, and he's the distinguished moderator of talk show panels debating current events and their social relevance by featuring

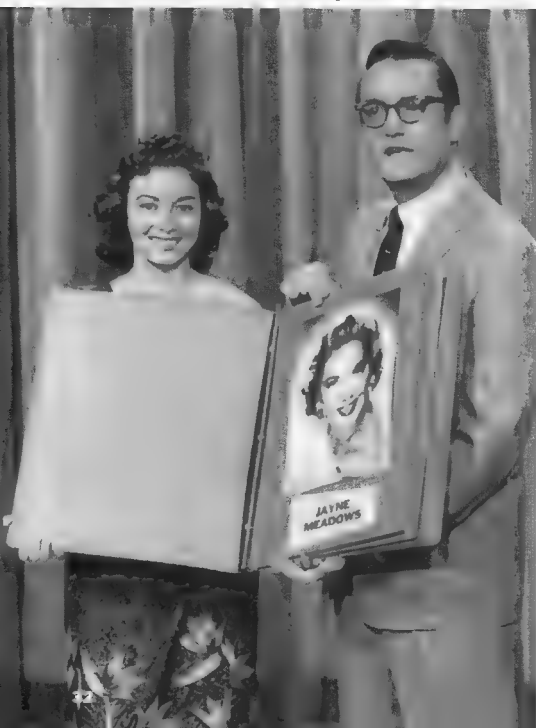


Steve Allen and his wife, Jayne Meadows, in a sketch on "The Milton Berle Show" broadcast Saturday, September 23, 1966 on ABC-TV.



Tony Randall hams it up and manages to make Gabe Dell crack a smile during a rehearsal for "The Steve Allen Show.")

Allen used an informal presentation to open his show and introduce his guests. Here he flips through the pages of his "guest book" to announce his wife, Jane Meadows, sister of Audrey, who played Alice to Jackie Gleason's Ralph on "The Honeymooners" show.



guests as diverse as Atilla the Hun, Sigmund Freud and Aristotle. He's the pop music and jazz prodigy who has composed over five thousand hit songs and performed hundreds of concerts over a music career spanning six decades. He was the originator and first host of the perennial late night forum, "The Tonight Show." Alumni of his show reads like a who's who of comedy—Bill "Jose Jimenes" Dana, Woody Allen, Louie Nye, Carl Reiner, Steve Lawrence and scores more.

But of the many different hats Steve has worn over the course of his career, the most important has to be that of all-American crazy. Allen has managed to find humor in nearly everything and has used television to explore the comic experience any way and every way he could. At a time when the TV variety show was still in its infancy, many of the best shows used the time-honored traditions of Vaudeville and reworked them (sans the Burlesque) into a series of loosely knit and often bizarre "sketches," usually featuring the show's host and major guest stars in a short thematic one act play where the improvs ran fast and loose. Television was considered more or less a novelty in those halcyon days and performers—particularly those with an adventurous sense—could take chances and experiment in ways pretty much unheard of in today's tightly scripted, often saccharin "sitcoms" where the gags are played to a formula and audiences laugh on cue.

Not surprisingly then, one of the more outlandish themes for a comedy sketch was the traditional horror film. By 1959, Columbia Pictures had unleashed its "Shock Theater" package to syndication, "Roland" was offering up his macabre brand of graveyard humor to TV audiences in Philadelphia; weird kids and "hip" adults were scooping up copies of a new magazine called *Famous Monsters of Filmland* and the top comics in the country were doing exaggerated send-ups of a thick-accented, Hungarian vampire popularized by Bela Lugosi.

Seeing that this monster mania was ripe with possibilities for comedy, Allen concocted a series of musical sketches starting with Dracula and joined by a comic cast the likes of which is rarely seen today: Tony Randall, Gabe Dell and Don Knotts. FM readers will particularly enjoy this grouping since Tony "Felix Unger" Randall played the mysterious Dr. Lao in *THE SEVEN FACES OF DR. LAO*, Don "Barney Fife" Knotts had made several fantasy film including *THE INCREDIBLE MR. LIMPETT*, and Gabe Dell—formerly one of the Bowery Boys—is the voice heard on the popular album "Famous Monsters Speak." (See page 80 to order a CD of this famous recording.)

Steve was not only one of the foremost writers and performers of quality television, he was also one of the most vocal proponents for quality programming (he was the chairman for the Parents Television Council) and, not surprisingly, he had a lot to say about the quality of today's media content.

Sadly, this wonderful man passed away on October 30, 2000. The article that follows is thought to be the last feature interview Steve ever granted. I had the privilege of speaking with him for over three hours in August of this year and our conversation touched many diverse subjects of interest. Steve, like most comics, had a strong understanding that comedy springs forth from the depths of tragedy so it is both ironic and fitting that his last interview should be here in these hallowed halls and it is my great privileges to be able to bring this to you.

All photographs in this feature from Steve's shows were provided for this article from his personal collection and have never before been published anywhere. Some were shot during rehearsal and some during the actual broadcast.

Join me now as we chat with a true Renaissance man—the incomparable Steve Allen.—RF



Steve was intrigued by the comic possibilities of doing a Gothic horror film as if it were a Broadway musical. In the photos below and above, Allen, Tony Randall and Gabe Dell perform a soft-shoe routine upon meeting in Count Dracula's castle. An authentic set and costumes (Dell's costume looks as good as any that Lugosi wore) complemented the gags. This sketch was originally broadcast on "The Steve Allen Show" on November 9, 1959.

the slay's the thing

RF: You were among the first to do horror-themed sketches on your shows. What was it about horror that appealed to you?

SA: There's obviously a connection between the horror genre and comedy. The line is very fine between the two, which is why it was always easy to do a Dracula, Frankenstein sketch or Wolf Man sketch. One of the best series we did was a series of sketches based on the premise that Broadway is beginning to run short of original musicals. You hardly ever see new musicals anymore. They made great shows from diverse subjects, even using the French Revolution as a theme, but there isn't very much that's come along recently. So we came up with the hokey comedy premise that pretty soon Broadway may run out of traditional famous novels and they might possibly see Rodgers and Hammerstein dealing with the classic monsters for material. We started with Dracula and that sketch worked so well and was so funny and so many people talked about it, we then went through the Wolf Man, Bride of Dracula and Bride of Frankenstein. We





Jayne Meadows as the bride, waits patiently as Dr. Frankenstein (Steve Allen) tries to explain the "birds and the beasts" to his monster (Louie Nye). ("The Steve Allen Show, NBC, 1959.) Get a load of those boots! (Early KISS??)

did about eight of those sketches.

RF: Horror seems to lend itself easily to both visuals and word exchange. You know, like "seek" and "shriek"—you can interchange the words using horror themes in a way that seems to be much more fitting than other subjects.

SA: Oh sure. I have, on occasion, defended word-play because sometimes people who don't care for that kind of humor say, "Oh, it's mere word-play" as if anybody could do it, you know. A lot of jokes just go over the heads of certain individuals or certain audiences. A lot of the people who did comedy movies often combined the two—like *THE BOWERY BOYS MEET THE MONSTERS* or *ABBOTT & COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*. There's a lot of precedent. There were many movies where Mantan Moreland or one of the other black comics would do the "I is a zombie" thing, or "Feet get movin'!"—that kind of thing, looking real scared. That seems somehow racist today, some of it, but nobody objected to it when it was done.

hungarian rip-sody

RF: Back in the late 50s, some parental groups were objecting to their kids seeing a film like *FRANKENSTEIN*, and there was a degree out outrage over these horror films being run on TV. Since you were breaking ground with your shows back then, did

you catch any flak for horror-themed skits?

SA: I don't remember there being any specific complaints, no. Of course, we didn't specialize in monsters, we would just every so often do a sketch. Probably the one member of our comedy team who was involved with the horror thing more than any other was Gabriel Dell—Gabe Dell—and to this day when I see other comics doing *Dracula*, what they are really doing is Gabe's version of *Dracula*. He had developed certain mouth movements, eye movements, and a peculiar exaggeration of the Hungarian accent that caught on. Today's parodies are really based on Gabe's thing—not Bela Lugosi. They're miming Gabe Dell miming Lugosi. But that's the power of a really good impressionist. A lot of the early comedians in the late 50s who jumped on the Ed Sullivan impression were really doing Will Jordan's Ed Sullivan rather Sullivan himself.

Gabe was a fascinating case, as is true of a lot of creative people. He always seemed to me capable of slipping into about 4-1/2% really cuckoo attitudes, especially when he would appear on my mostly ad-lib shows, the talk shows where we would do sketches. Almost all of them got totally outside the script. He would chase me up the aisle, up to the balcony, out on to the street, and I wasn't actually fearing that he was gonna draw blood from my neck, but he would get so physical and so violent, he was really kind of scary at such moments. I didn't want to

have to fight him, you know that wouldn't be entertainment. But, when he would finally trap me when I couldn't run down the hall any more, he'd jump on me and wrestle me to the ground. He was really a strong cat, and I always wound up thinking—is this guy okay tonight or is he going over the edge all together?"

take my life—please!

RF: What's your take on why people find sketches and gags that have to do with horror and death funny?

SA: Good question. I don't know if I have a definitive answer, but it is relevant that comedy is really about tragedy. There are sweet, adorable, innocent darling things to life—little girls running on the beach and boys going on their first date and all that sweet little stuff—but we never joke about that. If there are any jokes about all that sweet stuff, I've never heard them. We joke about death and war and AIDS and disease and getting caught in socially embarrassing situations. And there's all kinds of jokes about doctors and hospitals, and a lot of jokes about the guy who dies and goes to heaven, you know—the Henny Youngman type. But the raw material there is totally serious, even sometimes tragic. So that has some relation to your question.

Then also the horror characters—especially the famous characters like Frankenstein and Dracula—are so clear-cut and obviously menacing, even in the more shocky, sensationalistic modern pictures. Very often today the evildoer is someone who's insane—a maniacal killer. They don't have the richness of character that the Frankenstein and Dracula and Wolf Man and the Hunchback of Notre Dame characters have. They seem too obviously exploitation-minded.

roses are red, violence are blue

RF: If you look at the wealth of material that came out during the 20s, 30s and 40s and you compare that with what the postwar generation has produced, it's incredible that they haven't been able to even scratch the surface of what was done before, especially considering the legacy before them. Do you think the emphasis on graphic violence stems from effects pictures being just easier to mount or has the story become a faded concept?

SA: They stand on the shoulders of giants, as the old saying goes (heh, heh, heh.) One way that today's filmmakers or those of the last 15 years or so have an advantage is in the technology of filmmaking. Even Z-movies now often have incredible lighting and photography and editing and music scoring. They are greatly polished. Sometimes the content is garbage, especially movies you see late at night on cable that seem like they were made for \$12 and, despite the fact that they are low-budget operations with a bunch of actors you never heard of, there is a certain polish to them.

Sam Peckinpah was one of the first to make graphically violent pictures—especially violent westerns—and he used slow motion so that you saw blood slowly pouring out of a bullet hole, or a man would have his face smashed by a fist or an axe or whatever, and you saw the blood gushing out in slow-motion. That uses the medium to drive home a point but it's objectionable depending on who the audience is. If it's a bunch of 47-year-old former Marines, well, they've seen wars in reality so they're not going to be coarsened by such



Skull-ective bargaining? The Three Stooges found the subject of Horror to be ripe with possibilities.

The face behind the voice—Gabe Dell is the voice heard on the popular 1960s recording, "Famous Monsters Speak." According to Steve Allen, comedians doing impressions of Dracula are not actually parodying Bela Lugosi, but rather they are doing Gabe Dell doing Lugosi, since it was Gabe who originated the exaggerated voice and mannerisms which are the hallmarks of the traditional Dracula today.





Abbott and Costello milked their famous "haunted house" sketch on a variety of TV shows in the 50s. Above is the historic broadcast where they visit Universal Studios' makeup department on "The Colgate Comedy Hour" in 1954. That's Glenn Strange back in the Frankenstein makeup for his part in the sketch, which ended with the first and only television appearance of Blacky Lagoon (below), featuring Ben Chapman, direct from his acclaimed role in the Jack Arnold film.



(Below) Another "haunted house" sketch, this time with legendary Lon Chaney Jr. in the Frankenstein makeup! ("The Colgate Comedy Hour," 1950. These shots bring a tear to the eye, don't they? Talk about great TV!—RF)



material. But a six-year-old child seeing that sort of thing can be harmed by it, and, I believe, is.

claudé reigns

RF: Do you think technology has overshadowed storytelling?

SA: To refer back to the extent the technology of a given moment effects what the other directors can do, I remember one of my favorite spooky movies from when I was about 12 years old was *THE INVISIBLE MAN*, the original one, with Claude Rains. First of all, I loved everything Claude Rains ever did. One of the reasons that *CASABLANCA* is such a great picture is his character. He was so—to use the word in its correct sense—"cool". I hate the way young people today use the word "cool." It's wrong! All the word "cool" means to kids today is, "Okay. So I'll see you at four o'clock. Okay, cool." Now, there's nothing cool about four o'clock!

But anyway, Rains was cool in the sensible use of that word. Very sophisticated and always a little glimmer of humor in whatever he was doing. But, that picture could not have been made until they figured out a way to make it appear that the guy is really invisible—walking through the snow unseen, a half-clothed, half-unseen figure running around the room—whatever tricks they could do. So that's a sensible use of the technology. And some of the Wolf Man effects are impressive where one moment he looks normal, then the next moment you see the beginning of hair growing as he changes. The techniques weren't as sophisticated as today and all those films depended heavily on technology. But they weren't objectionable the way some of today's violence is.

There's nobody really playing heavies today like Rains. No matter what kind of a bad person he played, you couldn't really hate him, he was just too charming.

RF: Did you know him?

SA: Yes. I sat next to him one night of my life at a dinner party, we were the mutual guests of a dear friend of mine, Irwin Allen, who produced all those disasters—that is, movies about disasters, not the movies themselves!

And the same thing applies to Boris Karloff, Lugosi, Lon Chaney—there was only one of them. Everybody who ever played a role based on something they'd done was really doing a piece of them in a sense, whether they were doing it for comedy or legitimate.

slime of the times

RF: Do today's filmmakers hinder themselves by resorting to vulgarity over substance?

SA: Yes, it doesn't take much talent to do that. Sometimes when young people say "You're right—people are doing some dumb things (in the media), but we've gotta have creative freedom," I have one word for them—*CASABLANCA*. Is it a good picture? It's better than anything you ever did and there isn't a vulgar word in it. Even the sex is more sexual. You watch the film and you want to see those two people come together. And you cry at the end because they can't—she's married to another guy. Your heart wants you to tell them to break that law about the sanctity of marriage because love is so power-



Tony Randall and Steve Allen meet old Ygor (Don Knotts, who displays his genius for "mugging" for the camera) during a rehearsal for the sketch. Note the grin Allen is trying unsuccessfully to hold back. His ability to let himself laugh at whatever struck him as funny is part of what endeared him to his audiences.

ful. That's a picture that deals with a lot of important themes. It's a masterpiece, and there is absolutely nothing objectionable about it: Quality is quality. So it's not about—can powerful shows be made without being vulgar. The real question seems to be, what do we do about things that *are* really vulgar and really disgusting but artistically are still very good?

RF: Why is it that television particularly plays to the lowest common denominator, even when the material is basically good?

SA: When you bend to quality, you make it tougher for material which is actually better according to cultural and artistic standards, because it lacks the punch in the face. It lacks the shock. It lacks the sensational value. And if you put it on opposite a show like "The Sopranos," "Sopranos" will probably get the higher ratings.

This argument is also raging at the moment, as you know, about wrestling on television. Back in 1948, as a comic, I was describing wrestling matches. I'm familiar with wrestling and I used to support it indirectly with

jokes, so I'm no enemy in principle of professional wrestling. It was fake then and its fake now. But it wasn't vulgar then—it wasn't dirty. Nobody was using four-letter profanities as part of their act. And it's appealing chiefly to children now—that's the sad part. If it was only a bunch of 50-year-old guys drinking beer watching, well, I don't agree with their taste, but it's a free country. But there are a lot of 11-year-old kids loving those shows, so that's causing actual social harm.

RF: Yes, I agree with you on that. Foul-mouthed wrestlers seem to have taken on the role that the old TV horror hosts we grew up with had, but they had class. Kids naturally want to emulate whoever seems weird or larger than life, but the kooky "cool ghoul" characters didn't do any psychological damage to their audience the way some of these wrestlers are. I mean, monster are fun, but I prefer the fantasy kind rather than seeing adult frustrations played out. Imagine Frankenstein's monster grabbing the doctor and saying and doing what some of these wrestlers do! The whole cultural standard seems to have gone down the drain.



Continuing the Broadway musical theme of the sketch, Ygor (Don Knotts) makes his entrance from his coffin, and breaks into song as Dracula (Gabe Dell) listens. Knotts has an uncanny knack for facial expression, often making himself seem almost a 3-dimensional cartoon. (Courtesy Steve Allen Collection.)



a little bit o' soul

RF: Today, the monsters could be your next-door neighbor or the town maniac, but when we think about the fantasy monster films, there's an inherent thread of morality in them that I think accounts for their appeal. I've noted that young kids are usually less frightened by these monsters. Rather, they seem to identify with them.

SA: That's true, but on the other hand, you were really supposed to be scared and you *were*, if you were sensitive and paying attention to what was on the screen. But there were little artistic touches—the famous scenes in the first two Frankenstein films—one where the monster stumbles into the hut and he's with a blind man who doesn't see anything evil or immoral because he doesn't see anything at all. That's a sweet moment—you can use that as the subject for a sermon, if you want to. And then there's the scene where he's with the little girl and she doesn't see anything wrong with him, either. That's beautiful. But you're not going to see that in any of today's blood and guts movies.

It could be argued that children as young as two, three or four perhaps ought not to be exposed to anything that's really scary, but that has nothing to do with morals or ethics or taste or vulgarity. But, that aside, there was no vulgarity in those old movies. Even a man biting a woman on the neck was not thinkably objectionable.

RF: I've always thought that children have as much curiosity about death and violence as adults do. We as a culture have been telling kids ghost stories for as long as history, but I think the emphasis should be on the morality issue—keep to the fictional boogie man under the bed rather than exposing them to the knife-wielding psycho who could very well live across the street.

SA: It has to do with the tragic elements of human existence on this very dangerous planet. A basic element of entertainment stems from that. It's just that vulgarity has become content.

psycho-logically speaking

Post-crypt: When we consider how we react to the fears inherent in life, it's interesting to consider just how absurd it can all be. That's a fundamental reason why we laugh and why horror is such a ripe subject for comedy. On one of his shows in the 50s, Steve had a psychologist on who said that the only two instinctive fears in people are the fear of loud noises and the fear of falling.

"I have a great fear," Steve replied, without missing a beat, "of making a loud noise while falling."

You'll be sorely missed, Mr. Allen.—RF

Steve was the honorary co-chairman of the Parents Television Council, an organization dedicated to influencing television show sponsors to compel the networks to take responsible action towards the heavily adult content that dominates the air today and to stop the proliferation of vulgar and violent programming that is having a profound and damaging effect on children. For more information on the PTC's programs and how you can add your voice in support of this cause, please write to Parents Television Council, 600 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90017, call 213-629-9255, or look them up on the Internet at www.parentstv.org.



A man for all seasonings—Count Dracula (Gabe Dell) adds a little salt to enhance the flavor of old Ygor's blood (Don Knotts) on "The Steve Allen Show." Note the grandiose set—a magnificent tribute to the Ghoulden Days of Gothic horror films. (Courtesy Steve Allen Collection.)

THE GHOUL



Does your jewelry lose its flavor in the bedpost overnight? Professor Morlant (Karloff) recovers the "Eternal Light." (THE GHOUL, British/Gaumont, 1933.)

karloff sails to Britain to prove that diamonds are a ghoul's best friend

Gaumont-British Picture Corp. Ltd — 1933 — Black-and-white — 73/76 minutes

Directed by T. Hayes Hunter
Screenplay: Roland Pertwee and John Hastings Turner
Adapted by Ruper Downing from the novel by Frank King and Leonard Hines
Produced by Michael Balcon
Photography: Gunther Krampf
Music by Louis Lev;
Art Director: Alfred Junge;
Makeup: Heinrich Heitfeldt
Sound Recording: A. Birch

Principal Players:
Boris Karloff (Professor Morlant), Cedric Hardwicke (Broughton the solicitor), Ernest Thesiger (Laing), Dorothy Hyson (Betty Harlon), Anthony Bushell (Ralph Morlant), Ralph Richardson (Nigel Hartley), Kathleen Harrison (Kaney), Harold Hugh (Aga Ben Dragore), D.A. Clarke-Smith (Mahmoud), Jack Raine (Chauffeur)

death becomes him

In an old dark house outside of London, cluttered with various momentos of his discoveries, famed Egyptologist Professor Morlant lies on his death bed, giving final instructions for his burial to his servant, a dour Scot named Laing. Laing disapproves of his master's beliefs ("He's set in his ways and they're the ways of the heathen—he's stubborn and unbending and will be so at the throne itself," he tells a clergyman who has come to offer spiritual comfort to the dying man.) Even more, Laing distains Morlant's plans for the Eternal Light, a fabulous jewel which he believes will allow him to pass into the afterlife, in accordance with ancient Egyptian beliefs. Laing feels it is wrong for Morlant to take the jewel to the grave with him, thus depriving his heirs, but listens obediently as his master gives him instructions. In the shadow filled room, the dying Morlant points to a statue of the Egyptian god Anubis, telling Laing how he is to be buried in a specially built tomb outside the house.

"Bury me at dusk in the clothes I told you. You will place the figure of Anubis at the west end of the inner chamber. On the night of the full moon, at the first hour, I will make my offering



Morlant's butler, Laing (Ernest Thesiger), carries a torch for his master. (Below) An intriguing prop-osition—Morlant makes an offering to Anubis to insure his resurrection. The statue is the same one seen in Universal's THE MUMMY the year before.





Bend there, done that—The Ghoul obviously never heard the old saying, “if it ain’t bar-oke, don’t fix it.” (karloff in THE GHOUL, British-Gaumont, 1933.)

Looking much like a plaster statue, Karloff waits for the camera to roll in this rare behind-the-scenes photo from THE GHOUL (British Gaumont, 1933.)



of The Eternal Light to Anubis, Opener of the Way. If I have done well in his sight, those fingers will closer over the jewel and he will open to me the gates of immortality,” he tell Laing. The jewel is to be placed in Morlant’s left hand and secured by a bandage wrapped around the hand. “The Eternal Light must lie with me in the tomb,” Morlant says. When Laing expresses his fears, the dying man tells him, “If this (jewel) should leave me, then you’ll have reason to fear! For when the full moon strikes the door of my tomb, I will come back, you hear? I will come back—to kill!” (Well, if you’re gonna get nasty about it...)

the butler did it

But Morlant’s plans are doomed from the start. Despite his promise to bandage the jewel to the dying man’s hand, Laing removes it from the bandage upon Morlant’s death and hides it, intending to save it for the professor’s heirs, Betty Harlon and Ralph Morlant, the dead man’s niece and nephew. Others, too, are interested in the Eternal Light. Broughton, Morlant’s greedy solicitor—while rooting through his client’s accounts and journals—has noted withdrawals of vast sums of money and reference to the jewel. Aga Ben Dragore, the man who originally stole the jewel from its resting place in Egypt and sold it to Morlant, has come to the old house, accompanied by a member of the cult that wants the jewel back. Betty and Ralph, although hostile to each other, have arrived at the house, accompanied by Betty’s roommate, Kaney. There is also a mysterious, shadowy figure who has been trying to get into the Professor’s tomb.

reser-wreck-tion

Laing, who had gone to London to try and warn Betty about the jewel and that others are after it, is making his way through the woods to the old house when, in the light of the full moon, he sees something that causes him to scream and run in terror to the house. The door to Morlant’s tomb, which can only be opened from inside, swings open and Morlant emerges just as he said he would. But this figure is a thing from the grave—an enraged powerful being who will stop at nothing to reclaim the jewel that was supposed to have been buried with him. He’s determined to get it back, no matter how many he has to kill to do it.

rebel without a clause

In 1933, Boris Karloff left Universal after the studio had broken its agreement with him of giving him a raise each time it exercised its six month option on his contract. In fact, not only was Karloff informed that he would not get the agreed upon raise, but that he would have to take a cut in pay! Karloff’s response was to leave the studio. It was during that time Gaumont/British Picture Corporation contacted the actor about starring in THE GHOUL, believed by many to be the second horror film ever produced in Great Britain. (The sound version of THE LODGER (1932) is considered to be the first). For the first time in 23 years, Boris Karloff returned to England, where he assumed the film’s leading role as well as being reunited with his three brothers.

THE GHOUL is a mixture of the type of chiller that Karloff had been doing at Universal and the British mystery/intrigue thrillers that came from the pens of such writers as Edgar



The choke's on her—one of the more chilling scenes in **THE GHOUL**, when Karloff stalks Betty (Dorothy Hyson).

Wallace. The film's opening, with Karloff giving his deathbed instructions and warning of retribution from the grave, sets things up effectively, but then the film goes off into following the various characters seeking the Eternal Light. Laing has taken it because he believes it should go to the two heirs. Broughton the solicitor is after the gem for its value. The parson, Nigel Hartley, is a thief who intends to obtain the gem even if he has to dynamite the door to the dead man's tomb! Aga Ben Dragore is after the gem for his own noble reason—he either recovers it or his life is forfeit to the Egyptian sect that worships it.

a little help from his fiends

Karloff is effective in his time on screen—which is actually less than half of the film—but he makes the most of it, even though for the bulk of his reappearance he has no dialogue, relying on his expressions and body language. In fact, there are times when his performance is reminiscent of the Frankenstein monster, stalking along in his deadly, obsessive quest. Karloff is aided tremendously by the makeup devised by Heinrich

Heifeldt—who had been borrowed from Germany's UFA studios—which gives credence to the look of a fiend who has returned from the grave as a living-dead horror.

Cedric Hardwicke is snapping and ill-tempered as the solicitor, Broughton, looking as if he stepped out of a tale by Charles Dickens. Ernest Thesiger is excellent as Laing, whether commenting disapprovingly of his master's "heathen" beliefs, or reacting in terror when confronting his former master. In his first film role, Ralph Richardson gives a good show of himself as the bogus parson, while Harold Huth is all seedy charm and toothy smile as Dragore.

Dorothy Hyson and Anthony Bushell play the at-first-hostile cousins. Hyson is surprisingly gutsy for a horror heroine of that period, determined to go to her uncle's house to find out what is going on. In her scene with Karloff, she proves she can be terrified with the best of them. Bushell, for the first two thirds of the film, is annoying—snapping at Hyson and Hardwicke like he has a major chip on his shoulder and a built-in belligerent streak. He doesn't start to be appropriately heroic and almost likeable until the last third of the film. Kathleen Harrison is the



The Ghoul engages in a little stair-ing contest. Eerie lighting, Gothic sets and the great Karloff mystique all combine to give *THE GHOUL* a chilling atmos-fear, but unfortunately do little to help its plodding pace and storyline.

typical comedy relief as the heroine's dizzy roommate, falling for Dragore's scheming charms as he tries to find the jewel. But in a twist, she turns out to be the one to hold the villains at bay by threatening to drop the jewel into a well, even if they shoot her, as Hardwicke's character is more than ready to do.

lost & found

T. Hayes Hunter, an American director who moved to London in 1927, directs the action in a straight-forward manner, every so often coming up with a moment that would be at home in some of Universal's chillers, but on the whole, his direction is methodical, making the film crawl at a syrupy pace. Gunther Krampf's photography makes the most of the gloomy shadows and sets, and Louis Levy's music score adds atmos-fear, particularly refreshing since so many films of this fledgling sound era lacked an integrated music track.

The script by Roland Pertwee and John Hastings Turner is interesting, although the mystery sub-plots bog the story down. Yet there are a surprisingly effective moments—one

of which—the scene where Karloff kneels before the statue of Anubis, tears open his shirt and proceeds to carve the symbol of an ankh in his chest with a knife before dying—is highly effective. Even in black and white, watching Karloff perform the ritual and the shot of the bloody carving on his chest is startling. For both the more restrained British as well as the less restrained Americans, this was unusual and rather strong stuff in its day. It wasn't until the 1950s that the restraints would fall away when Hammer Films began their series of technicolor chillers.

THE GHOUL is far from being the creepy classic many hoped it was, but it is still worth watching, even with its slower moments, if only for the performances of Karloff, Thesiger and Richardson. Hardwicke is also fun to watch, even if this is not one of his better performances. For many years, *THE GHOUL* was thought to be a lost film. Then, in 1969, a print was found in Czechoslovakia with Czech subtitles. A few years ago, an intact English print was found and has been since released on video tape from Sinister Cinema and several other outfits that specialize in public domain titles.



SOUNDS OF THE IMAGI-NATION™

Little Known Episodes of Horror, Sci-Fi & Suspense from the Ghoulish Age of Radio

ORIGINAL SYN-YNOMS

Have you ever wondered why we call the box in the living room that displays all those wonderful images a "TV"? Or where the phrase "sci-fi" came from? Like many words, phrases and abbreviations that are now ingrained in our culture, these words have their origins in the most influential medium of communications ever devised—broadcasting.

let's watch a "sit-com"

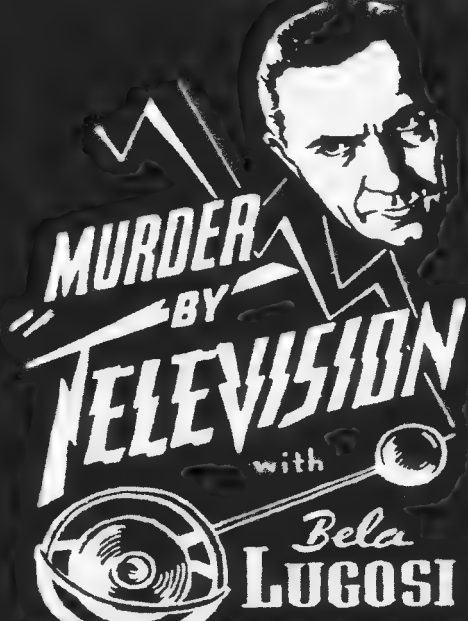
Today, we popularly refer to television shows based on "situation comedy" as "sit-coms." We owe the idea to Dezi Arnez and the "I Love Lucy" program (which was the first to film its episodes live using three cameras simultaneously...a subject that will be explored in detail in the next issue of Famous Monsters.) Near the end of 1950, an article in *Radio-TV Life* magazine mentioned that, according to the ratings at that time, "I Love Lucy" was the No. 1 "sit-com" on the air. The abbreviation stuck and henceforth, the situation comedy has been known generically as a "sit-com."

turn on the "tv"

When television came along in the late 1940s, we all called it—"television." The popular abbreviation of "TV" came about thanks to an entrepreneurial automobile manufacturer! Earl Muntz—better known to his contemporaries as "Madman Muntz"—began making television sets in the Fall of 1948. As the sets came down in price due to mass marketing, sales were brisk and Muntz used a number of different methods of advertising his product. One of his most basic methods of advertising was skywriting. A day did not go by when a half dozen or more airplanes would fly through the skies writing "Buy Muntz Television." In an interview I did with Earl in the 1960s, he told me that the biggest problem he had with the skywriting was the length of time it took to spell out the message. By the time the plane was writing the last few letters of "television" the first letters of the ad message had disappeared. He solution to the problem was ingenious—he shortened his message to read "Buy Muntz T.V." From then on, people referred to the magic picture box as a "TV" set!

let's read a "sci-fi" story

Today we use the truncated term "sci-fi" when we speak about the general subject of science fiction. One popular myth has it that the term was coined in 1954 by



A 1935 film starring Bela Lugosi had the ominous title, **MURDER BY TELEVISION** (as TV was still called back then, as seen in this newspaper ad).

a prominent West Coast fan who claims to have looked in his car's rearview mirror one day and noticed the term "sci-fi" tattooed on the end of his tongue! In fact, the term was already being bantered about within the literary and scientific communities well before then and even as respected an author as the late Robert Heinlein is reported to have used it in his personal correspondence well before 1954. But, like most colloquialisms that gain widespread acceptance in our language, it was the power of broadcasting that spawned the term. Here's where it most likely actually originated:

Near the end of 1938, a new radio program was launched which was broadcast Tuesday afternoons at 2:00PM on the NBC Blue Network called "Science Everywhere." The show was moderated by Dr. Carroll Lane Fenton, and his stories were based on all types of science, including the popular subject of science fiction, which Dr. Fenton referred to on the air simply as "sci-fi"—a timesaving nickname that also conjured up visions of the fantastic and the unknown. By the late 1950s, the term gained widespread use as television took to airing more and more futuristic science programming in deference to America's increasing fascination with atom bombs and technology. It's place in English slang was cemented in the 1960 motion picture about science fatalism called **THE DAY THE EARTH CAUGHT FIRE**, when the character of newspaper reporter Edward Judd—while discussing the effects of simultaneous nuclear test explosions with his friend, Leo McKern, says, "You'll have to fill me in on the details. I'm afraid I'm not up on my sci-fi."

So there you have it. The next time you turn on the "TV" and decide to watch a "sit-com" about "sci-fi," remember to take a moment to thank *Radio-TV Life*, Earl Muntz and Dr. Carroll Lane Fenton for saving you a lot of extra syllables!—FB

LUGOSI LIVES ETERNAL



a famous
monsters
foto
scrapbook
of public
vampire
#1.



The caped grue-sader—Lord of the undead! (Bela Lugosi, DRACULA, Universal, 1931.)



(Top) With unidentified cameraman, cinematographer James Wong Howe, director Tod Browning, James Bradbury Jr., and Carroll Borland on the set of Browning's remake of **LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT**, released as **MARK OF THE VAMPIRE** (MGM, 1935) (Bottom) A pair of publicity fotos for MGM circa 1935. Observe those marvelous hands!





With an unidentified Mina from a 1940s stage revival of Dracula.



Rare behind-the-scenes photo shows Bela seated before the makeup mirror as he readies himself for another performance. Unlike his famous vampire character, Lugosi's reflection looms large in the halls of horror fame!

16 FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT BELA

1. He was born Bela Blasko on October 20, 1888 in Lugos, Hungary.
2. He used the name of his birth village for his new stage name, Lugosi, which means "one who is from Lugos."
3. He made his debut on the stage in "Romeo" in his hometown of Lugos, Hungary, in 1906.
4. He played a number of diverse parts on the stage during the early days of his career, including the part of Jesus Christ in *The Passion*, in 1916.
5. He had only a limited command of the English language when he first played Dracula on the stage and learned his lines phonetically.
6. Universal Studios did not want him for their 1931 production of DRACULA, even though he had played the role on the New York stage thousands of times.
7. He was an avid stamp collector.
8. He was married 5 times.

"Dracula is both a blessing and a curse to me," Lugosi was once quoted as saying.

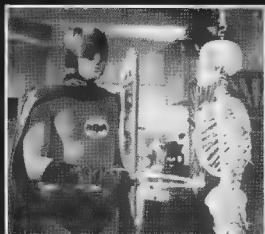
9. Although he is the quintessential personification of Dracula, he actually only played the character twice in feature films: in the 1931 original and again in ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN, in 1948.
10. He loved cigars and is rarely seen without one, even in publicity photos for many of his films.
11. Later in life, he smoked cheap cigars, which he referred to as "El Ropo, El Stinkos."
12. He was a dedicated character actor who often remained reclusive during a film in order to better immerse himself in his role—a trait which undeservedly saddled him with a reputation for being unfriendly.
13. His last "legitimate" film was THE BLACK SLEEP in 1956. He died on August 16 of that year.
14. Although he appears for a few brief moments in Ed Wood's PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE, he died before production began and Wood used a chiropractor friend of his as a "double" for Lugosi for the rest of the picture.
15. He was laid to rest wearing one of his theatrical Dracula capes.
16. His son, Bela Jr., owns one of his father's only other capes and has it on display at the Knuckleheads store in Glendale, California.

RSVILLE...HEADLINES FROM

FM JOINS THE "BAT" PACK

his Halloween season turned out to be one of the busiest ever for Famous Monsters of FilmLand and editor Ray Ferry.

Things took off like a bat out of Dracula's crypt when Ray made his first personal appearance in over four years at the popular RAY COURTS HOLLYWOOD COLLECTORS SHOW at the Beverly Garland Holiday Inn in North Hollywood, California on October 7 and 8. While he looked forward to the show and meeting fans, he was rather surprised to find himself seated at the main star table, right in the company of such film and TV legends as ADAM (Batman) WEST, FRANK (Riddler) GORSHIN, JULIE (Cat Woman) NEWMAR, YVONNE (Batgirl) CRAIG, LEE (Cat Woman) MERIWETHER, GEORGE BARRIS (Creator of the famed Batmobile) and the incomparable GARY OWENS (Space Ghost; Roger Ramjet)!



ADAM WEST—friend of those who walk the straight and narrow.

was so long that show promoter RAY COURTS had to open a side door and redirect the crowd because the line was blocking the main entrance isle and was backed up out the door and into the parking lot! Batmobile creator GEORGE BARRIS and his wife SHIRLEY were on hand and had the life-size color photograph stand-up Ray had shot of Adam in 1996 for the special "Adam West Remembers Batman" magazine placed right next to the Batmobile where it looked great! Superhero and machine together again!



The original Prince of Puzzlers, FRANK GORSHIN

"I didn't get to see much of the rest of the show," Ray said, "because we were hemmed in at the table by the crowds. I was having a particularly good time watching Adam (West) signing what looked like a never-ending stream of 8X10s. And Frank (Gorshin) kept doing those famous celebrity-impression faces of his as fan after fan came over to him for an autograph. I was getting a big kick out of watching that. While the Batman reunion was just down the end of the table, I was actually seated right next to my friend, Gary Owens,

which couldn't have made the weekend more enjoyable for me. I would have thought his "Laugh-In" shots would be the most popular, but this crowd was asking for a lot of his "Space Ghost", "Roger Ramjet" and "Munsters" photos, often in lots of 10 and 20



GARY OWENS and his good friend, Mike.

still at a clip. As he was signing, he kept tossing out one-liners to his fans that were hysterical. Gary is one of those rare people who can be speaking with you quite seriously and then segue his thoughts and end a sentence with a gag line that you just don't see coming! I like writing all the gags we use in FM, but I have to think about them for a few minutes...I'm always in awe watching Gary zing them out as he talks."

"I have to compliment RAY and SHARON COURTS. They put on the best shows of their kind and there's no event I've been to that surpasses them in hospitality or great star attractions. I found them to be friendly, always courteous, no matter how hectic things get (must be that good Southern living!), and if there was a detail or amenity they hadn't thought of and provided, I sure didn't notice. I had a great time, and Ray and Sharon made me feel like a celebrity myself."

For more updates on future events, visit the RAY COURTS website at www.hollywoodcollectorsshow.com.

SCREAM GEMS

On October 21, Ray was the featured guest speaker to introduce a special screening of James Whale's classic, BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, at the Cypress Twin Family Theaters in Cypress, California. Sponsored by BRETT BUTLER of Shock Theater. In what was a novel approach, the film was run on the giant theater screen from the newly released DVD of the film from Universal and was projected using a state-of-the-art digital projection system. The film never looked so good! No pops, no scratches, no jumping inherent in traditional projection prints. With more and more theaters and studios converting to an all-digital format, there is a good possibility that horror fans may yet see more frequent theatrical performances of time-horored classics.

FM's Gene Reynolds acted as a trick-or-treater in reverse as he distributed free FM collector's badges to all the attendees. Besides BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, the playbill included a selection of vintage drive-in and theater popcorn and soda promos ("let's all go to the lobby!") as well as MAD MONSTER PARTY, which the kids also seemed to really like.

All in all, it was a special night of terrific cinematic and we're talking with Brett about doing a regular FM series at the theater.

RSVILLE...HEADLINES FROM

HORRORSVILLE...HEADLIN

FM HAUNTS THE MAGIC CASTLE

But the big noose for the season was the gala FM party at the MAGIC CASTLE on Thursday evening, October 26, which was a tremendous success! Over 125 fans, industry professionals and stars mixed and mingled to celebrate FM magazine and the release of Ray's controversial new book, *Life Is But A Scream!*

Among the stellar attendees were TV legends ADAM WEST, GARY OWENS and BILL "Jose Jimenez" DANA (who showed himself to be a true-blue classic horror fan and even performed a few of his famous routines as "Bela Lugosi" to everyone's delight!), "Mausoleum" star BOBBIE BRESEE, manager to the "Star Wars" MILT SUCHIN, "Black Scorpion" star MICHELE LINTEL, producer CRAIG NIEVES, makeup artist ROBERT HALL, a half-dozen former Playboy Playmates who are featured in the new series including ATHENA MASSEY, JEFF RECTOR (also seen in the "Black Scorpion" series), "Dark Shadows" alumni LARA PARKER, ROGER DAVIS and JIM PIERSON, former (and soon to be current) FM writer of the original "Men Behind the Monsters" series, VERNE LANGDON, Don Post Studios



Hard at work—Posing with ADAM WEST, MICHELE LINTEL, and some of the "monsters" from "Black Scorpion."

Photo by Paul Fournier

and his lovely wife, SHIRLEY, popular radio personality DICK HEATHERTON (formerly of WCBF-FM in New York now in sunny California), KFWB radio personality LAURA GREGORY, SIDESHOW TOY (who supplied several of their newest items including a four and a half foot tall fiberglass Frankenstein "Little Big Head"), sci-fi artist FRANK KELLY FREAS and his wife LAURA, radio personalities DICK HEATHERTON (who our New York fans will remember from WCBF-FM) and LAURA GREGORY (KFWB radio), LA's own "Man of 999 Faces" WALLY WINGERT (in full Gothic vampire regalia) and several of his outlandishly costumed cohorts, FM Staffers ERIC HOFFMAN, SCOTT FRESINA, JANET MALLEY, DAVID DEL VALLE and of course, the one and only GENE REYNOLDS.

We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to Magic Castle Host MILT LARSON, general manager TONY WILSON and their staff for a fear-st class job and for making everyone feel so much

at home. The food, drink, decorations and amenities were all fantastic. Plans are in the works for an ongoing series of gatherings at THE MAGIC CASTLE with the Fang Gang. Watch these pages and our web site for more details on how you can attend and have a great time.



An ear-ly moment with comic legends BILL "Jose Jimenez" DANA and GARY "Space Ghost" OWENS at The Magic Castle!

Photo by Paul Fournier

FM ON THE SCAREWAVES

On Sunday, October 29, editor Perry was the featured guest for an uninterrupted 90-minute interview on "The BILL BRAGG Show" on the Yesterdayusa.com Internet radio network. You can listen to excerpts from the show at www.famousmonsters.com. And be sure to check out FM's own FRANK BRESEE and his regular "Golden Days of Radio" show at www.yesterdayusa.com!

Finally, to wrap up the season on Halloween night, FM helped judge from among 225 costumed contestants in a terrific gathering at THE MAGIC CASTLE in Horrorwood. The party was attended by nearly 500 Horrorween revelers from 6:00PM right through the wee hours of the morning.

ARKOFF RETURNS!

A new series for HBO, being promoted as "Creature Features" is in development and will feature remakes of five films originally from B-movie veteran, SAM ARKOFF. Titles include THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED, TEENAGE CAVEMAN, WAR OF THE COLOSSAL BEAST, THE SPIDER, and HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER. Arkoff's son, Lou, described the project as "movies that were made for a specific fear that your next door neighbor was a communist, that the atom bomb will go off and aliens will invade the Earth. Today, those fears are different." Arkoff is teaming with several contemporary filmmakers to remake his dad's films for today's audience, while still trying to maintain the feel and style of the originals.

DAUGHTER FEAREST

It has been reported that a Los Angeles Superior Court has ruled to allow Sara Karloff's property rights lawsuit against Universal Studios to go to trial. Karloff alleges in part that Universal agreed to license certain images of her father, but then offered other similar monster images to licensees to avoid paying her royalties. She's looking for \$10 million in damages. If all this suing mania keeps up the way it's been going, we may yet see the day when Universal decides to take its original classic horror properties and shelf them as being too much trouble. Could anyone blame them?

HORRORSVILLE...HEADLIN

BRILLIANCE ON A BUDGET

**hail to the chief! roger corman—
in his first-ever feature interview
in the pages of famous monsters
of filmland!**

No one would question Roger Corman's deserved crown as the King of the sci-fi B-film world. Corman is without peer and has amassed an incredible portfolio, having produced and/or directed many films that are still among the most watched classics of all time. Incredible as it may seem, this genius of the genre has never before been featured in a one-on-one, feature interview in this magazine! I am more than proud to finally be able to correct that since, if Corman's palace is the movie theater, FM is its lobby, having promoted and bid welcome to many tens of thousands of Roger's horror and sci-fi fans over a forty+ year reign.

Like Ray Harryhausen, Corman is his own classification of film—an honor reserved for only an elite club of moviemakers. And like Harryhausen, Roger seems a quiet man. He is ever polite and speaks about his career in a soft, yet calculated manner. He seems modest, yet his speech gives one a sense that he enjoys the pleasure of respecting his own work. He takes his success in stride and seems to be at once proud of his accomplishments even as he is perhaps a bit surprised at the power of his legacy among fantastic film fans.

I had the pleasure of chatting with him recently about his prolific heyday and his newest TV series venture for the Sci-Fi channel—"Black Scorpion."

RF: (Black Scorpion producer) Craig Nevius was telling me you've been running all over the place recently.

RC: Yes, in the last two weeks I've been in New York, California, Vancouver, London, Zurich and Athens. But I'm

finally back here in New York for a while.

RF: My goodness! If you'd had a camera in your pocket, you probably could have made three films!

RC: Indeed!





Torch song—Vincent Price about to be roasted by Leo Gordon (center), Frank Maxwell (in black coat) and John Dierkes (far right) in Corman's *THE HAUNTED PALACE* (AIP 1963.)

the list of adrenaline messenger

RF: I know you had an engineering background. Where did the jump from college to your first connection with film occur?

RC: I had started at Stanford. My father was an engineer and my original plans were to follow in his footsteps in the same profession. By the time I was a senior, I realized I really didn't want to be an engineer, but it was either stay back an additional year and switch to another major or finish and take that degree in engineering. I figured I just want to get the degree and get out of there, so I stayed and finished that year as an engineer. Then I knocked around Hollywood but couldn't get a job anywhere. Finally, the only job I could get was a messenger at 20th Century Fox, so I took it and was eventually promoted to become a reader. They called it a "story analyst" to make it sound a little grander. I stayed there awhile and then I went to Europe to do graduate work in English at Oxford. When I came back I knocked around and did a bit of everything. I was a stagehand at a television station and a literary agent. During this time, I wrote my own script under an assumed name, sold it and went

along as an associate producer for nothing. I told the producer that I would work for nothing if I could work with him and learn and get the credit. He figured, "Why not?," since it wouldn't be costing him anything, but that enabled me to say legitimately that I was a writer/producer.

RF: Was there a particular person you'd met or a movie you saw that made you say, "This is what I want to do"—Filmmaking, instead of, say, theatre or some other area.

RC: No one person. I'd grown up in Southern California and had gone to Beverly Hills High School, and number my friends were the sons of some of the top people in the film industry so I knew a little about it. Then, when I went to Stanford, I became the film critic of the *Stanford Daily*. It was really probably being the film critic that most propelled me. I took the job partially because they gave the Stanford critic free passes to the two local theaters. So I went there and learned more about making movies by looking at them, knowing I would have to write about them afterwards. It made me concentrate more and learn a little bit more about how movies were put together.

RF: That's interesting. At the time you first started producing, did you look at yourself as an independent version of what

Republic or Monogram were doing, or did you look at yourself as sort of a new breed?

pushing the envelope

RC: It was a combination of both. I was aware of what Republic and Monogram—which had become by the time I was there, Allied Artists—I was aware of what they were doing and I knew there was a market for my kind of film. But I thought some of what they were doing was a little bit stodgy. They were doing just the same old types of B-pictures, and I felt it was possible to work with the same types of budget—actually even lower budgets than they had—but be a little bit more original and bring a little bit more energy and vitality to the film.

RF: The term "low budget" seems to be very ambiguous. If you're filming a one-set, character-driven dramatic piece, you don't need the same budget as making *THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN*. Did you look at your films from the point of view of art, or more addressing the elements that you would need to make a particular film feasible?

RC: It was a combination of both a creative approach and a business approach. I think that was one of the reasons I was able to succeed. The background in engineering gave me an analytical way of thinking and way to approach the productions that was a little more efficient than some of the ones other people were making. But I was also interested in the creativity as well and attempted to do something new and, hopefully, a little bit exciting. So it was working on both levels.

RF: Did you ever think of a certain scene where you were having problems and consciously say, "Let's just get this done and move on," or did you hear yourself saying, "I've got to get this the way I want it no matter what?"

RC: I'm always aware of the schedule and the budget, but I always did the best I could. There was never a shot that I said, "I will fluff this shot." I would say, "I will shoot it fast. I'm in trouble with the budget. I'm shooting an exterior, the sun is about to go behind that mountain and I need three more shots and we're not coming back to this location tomorrow." So I would be running like crazy to get what I had to have, but I would always give it my best shot.

never say die!

RF: Do you recall a particular time where you were working on a picture and would up thinking—this movie business isn't going to be quite what I thought it was? Or conversely, was there a point where you said, "Gee, if I can do this, I can do anything!"?

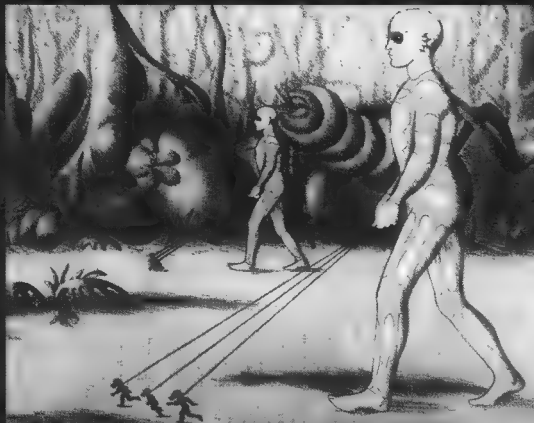
RC: It was closer to the latter. Until I started to make films on my own, I became discouraged a number of times and was close to giving up and getting a job in engineering. But once I started to make films, I got a great thrill—a great deal of creative satisfaction—from that point on. I was aware of the limitations of the budgets and schedules, but I took that as more of a challenge than anything else.

RF: Is there a particular film or filmmaker that really influenced you when you were getting started?

RC: Yes, a number of them. At the beginning I would probably say John Ford, Alfred Hitchcock and Howard Hawks. As I learned a little bit more, I began to appreciate some of the early European directors, particularly Eisenstein, who I thought



Among Corman's innovative deals—bringing the acclaimed foreign film, *THE TIN DRUM* (1979), to American audiences.



FANTASTIC PLANET (1973), another Corman import, told a tale of a strange world that kept humans as pets.

Wild Eagle meets the man from U.N.C.L.E.—Corman's *TEENAGE CAVEMAN* (1958) introduced the future Napoleon Solo (young Robert Vaughn, right) to future Hakawii chief, Frank DeKova.





"Frankenstein" (David Carradine) heads for his car in Corman's futuristic DEATH RACE 2000 (New World, 1973). It's plot of racers getting points for running down pedestrians could easily have been titled "New York Drivers in Los Angeles."

Hazel Court faces the wrath of the Red Death in one of Corman's beast Poe films, THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH (AIP, 1964.)



was brilliant.

future shock

RF: Do recall the first fantasy film that piqued your interest in science-fiction—in the sort of films that would become your mainstay?

RC: I don't remember specifically because I saw a lot of films from a very early age. I think from a fantasy or science fiction standpoint, probably the English film, *THINGS TO COME*, had a big influence on me. I was amazed at that film; I had never seen anything like it. And that may have led me into the direction of science fiction or maybe I already had a predilection and that film confirmed it. That's more likely.

RF: We hear stories about how everybody pitched in and did a little something extra to the pictures they worked on in the old days. Today, you don't see it that much because the business is so heavily unionized. Do you feel that when everybody is involved in the project and has the freedom to do whatever they need to do to make it work, that this produces better results?

RC: I think it's better when everybody pitches in. I don't see that much of a decline in that camaraderie in the independent field. I think it's more in the big-budget films, where everybody is working on their specific job and there isn't quite as much interaction. But in the independent and low-budget field, the camaraderie may not be quite what it was a number of years ago, but it's still there, and I think it's an extremely important component of independent filmmaking. It's one of the ways that the independent can compete with, and even beat, the majors because the crew is working so much better.

RF: Do you think the technology of films—the fact that anything that can be imagined can now be pretty much produced—has impacted movies in general in a negative way or in a positive way? Has the business adopted a "Let's just dazzle 'em" attitude?

RC: Well you've actually analyzed it very well yourself. Technology and special effects are tools and, in some films, the tools are overused and the film is shallow in the story and character development and they're depending upon the special effects to carry it. I believe that is a trap and leads to a bad film. What's best is when you can use all of the wonderful technology to help carry your story and illustrate the characters. So, when effects are integrated well, I think they help films tremendously. When they stand out too much, they can be detractive.

RF: Speaking of technology, since many of your productions were shot in black-and-white and you had to be somewhat hampered by the budgets, do you, as a filmmaker, have a preference to black-and-white or to color in story telling?

RC: I have a preference for color. I think black-and-white film is simply a chemical accident. In the 19th century, the first films were black-and-white—not because anybody chose to make them black-and-white—but because the chemicals available or the process available could only reproduce gradations of light and nothing else. Black-and-white film exists only for that reason. The



Much ado about...nothing? Boris Karloff and a young Jack Nicholson were paired in *THE TERROR* (AIP, 1963), a strange outing that Nicholson would later describe as "the first film I starred in that had absolutely no plot." (Below) Corman brought Karloff, Price and Peter Lorre together for a farciful retelling of *THE RAVEN* (AIP, 1963.) Everyone had fun making the film but the picture belongs to Lorre, who stole nearly every scene!

world around us is in color and I think motion pictures should be in color.

vincent van "go"

RF: When you started doing the series of "Poe" films, what was it about Vincent Price that caused you to feel that he'd be the best one to play the characters?

RC: I had never met him before we wanted to do *FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER*. Roderick Usher would be a man of great artistic and intellectual cultivation. He was very intelligent, very brilliant and very sensitive, and I felt that Vincent had that quality himself. I hadn't any intention of doing other Poe films—I just wanted to do that one, and I felt Vincent fit the part of Roderick Usher—which, of course, he did.

RF: How did he feel about the series?

RC: He liked the films. He took them as a challenge and he defended them in a number of interviews because some critics, at least in the United States, would look down a little on horror films. But Vincent never looked down on them. I think he was more at home in them particularly. Our first recognition came out of France and both the French critics and the English critics treated us extremely well. And eventually, the American critics did also. I think Vincent appreciated that.





Little Audrey?—Corman's bizarre LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (Filmgroup, 1960) was shot in only two days on a minuscule budget, yet remains one of the most respected cult films of its kind, and made the phrase, "Feed me!" a part of American pop culture. (Jonathan Haze.)

Veteran Ray Milland saw more than he bargained for as X—THE MAN WITH THE X-RAY EYES (AIP, 1963).



an eye for talent

RF: There have been so many stars today that got their start with you—not just performers, but directors as well. When you first came in contact with these people, did you recognize they'd reach the heights they have?

RC: In each one of these cases I recognized the ability and I chose them because of the ability I thought they had. Most of them were not going anywhere at that time—they were simply knocking around Hollywood and unemployed. I felt that they had what was necessary to succeed, but there was no way I could predict the incredible careers that Francis Coppola, James Cameron, Jack Nicholson, and so forth, would have. But with each one of them, I felt they would have very successful careers either as writers, directors, actors or whatever.

william tell-evision

RF: You're usually associated with film and I understood you weren't doing a lot of TV, but you seem to have hit a pretty good bull's-eye with "Black Scorpion." How did that come about?

RC: I made an arrangement with Showtime to do a series called "Roger Corman Presents" that ran for three years—all feature films. And one of them was an idea I had called, "Black Scorpion." It was to be like Spider-Man and Batman. The first film was extremely successful and got phenomenal ratings on Showtime—particularly in Europe. It did even better specifically in Germany and France. It got the highest rating in both countries for its time period in the entire year. So Showtime asked me to make another one, and that had equal success. Then the German television network that played it contacted me and said that the ratings were so high, they wanted to make a German version of "Black Scorpion" and they would pay me a royalty. I actually had no thought of making a "Black Scorpion" TV series. I made a couple of films and that seemed great, but then when they offered to pay me for this—well, my first thought was, I can make a fair amount of money every week without working. And then I thought, if they think it's that good, and I know how well it did in the United States, maybe I should make the series myself!

I hired Craig Nevius—who had written other things before it, and he took the basic idea which I had come up with and developed it and he did an excellent job. Most of the supporting characters and most of the development came from him. The main things I had were the female Superman/Spider-Man/Batman movie character, the title, "Black Scorpion," and the fundamental premise that she was a police woman by day and the Black Scorpion by night. Craig and I discussed the series at length, then he took it from there.

RF: Craig explained to me that you put all the time and backing to get the series shot, and then went out and sold the series later. Usually, it's the pilot first and then the series after a sale is made, so this must have been a big gamble.

RC: Yes, it was probably the biggest gamble I'd taken recently, but it seems to have paid off. My theory was, if you're selling a TV show, you're selling an idea. If it's a pilot, it's really just an idea because everybody knows you spend double or triple or more on the pilot than what you are going to spend on the actual series itself. So I thought, the thing to do is to make the



Vincent Price as "The Great Hood-In"—working his magic in AIP's **THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH**—a film that left and indelible impression on many an adolescent monster fan who first saw it upon the silver screen in 1964.



"Shoot—I may not know much about art—but I know what I don't like!" says Roderick Usher (Vincent Price) in his first "Poe" feature for Roger Corman, HOUSE OF USHER (AIP, 1960).

whole 23 episodes—one year's run—and then you're no longer selling an idea. You go to the market and say, "Here it is. What you see is what you get!" Luckily, they picked it up and it will be opening after the first of the year on the Sci-Fi Channel.

king for a slay

RF: Are you enjoying all the adulation from fans watching your films? You're really in the same club as Ray Harryhausen, Capra or Hitchcock, or Mel Brooks, in that we talk about *Roger Corman* films—whenever someone talks about your work, it's always "Roger Corman" first, followed by whatever picture you're talking about—it isn't a film that Roger Corman was the producer or the director of, but a *Roger Corman* film. How does that strike you at this point in your life?

RC: Well, I don't put myself in the same category as Hitchcock or Frank Capra or those other directors you mentioned, but I'm pleased with the fact that I'm well thought-of for a number of pictures over a period of time.

RF: Do you have a favorite film you've made?

RC: It might be *THE INTRUDER*—a picture that I made down South with a young actor named Bill Shatner, in the 1960s. It's about racial integration in the South. It got

wonderful reviews in one of the New York papers. I can still remember the quote! The review started out, "This motion picture is a major credit to the entire American film industry." It was also the first film I ever made that lost money!

to be continued

RF: Do you have a pet project you would really to see made?

RC: I just signed an agreement to co-produce with Tom Cruise for Paramount a big-budget version of *DEATHRACE 2000*. The original production has won a batch of web internet and magazine awards as the Best B-Picture of All Times.

RF: My friend, Curt Siodmak—who passed away recently—was the oldest active member of the screenwriter's guild. I presume you have enough leisure time at this stage of your career to do projects that suit your fancy. Do you plan to keep going?

RC: Oh, yes—I plan to keep going. I think I will probably slow down a little bit. In fact, I'm in the process of that now, and I would like to do a film that I will try to develop with a little more time and personal attention to. But I won't quit doing films—I have no intention of stopping!

RF: You've just made a lot of fans very happy, Roger! Fangs for providing us with so many hours of great entertainment. Here's to much more! ♦♦

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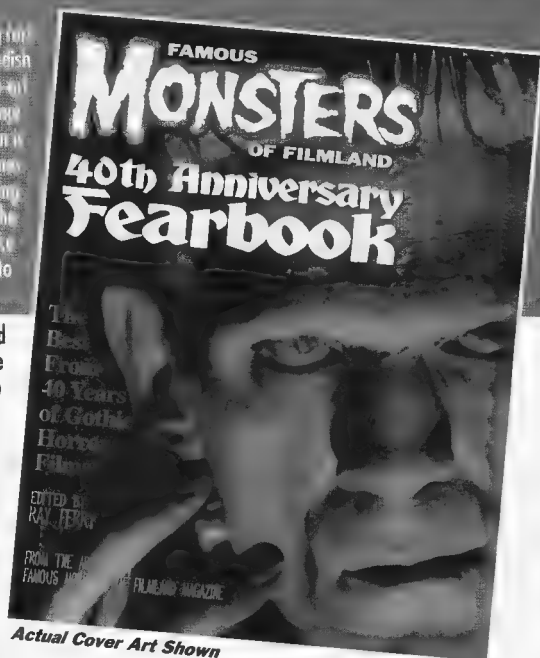
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(Left) How to exorcise at home—Regan rises to the occasion before the eyes of the surprised priests. Said the charming Linda Blair of the experience, "It was a very demon-ding role!" (**THE EXORCIST**, Hoya Productions, 1973.)

(Top) Conrad Veidt contemplates his new hands—the hands of a murderer—in the first production of **THE HANDS OF ORLAC** (Pan Film; Austria, 1924), remade by Karl Freund in 1935 with the legendary Peter Lorre as **MAD LOVE**.



(Right) Super sci-fi heroines abound today thanks to the emergence on the scene of lovely and sexy Jane Fonda in Roger Vadim's **BARBARELLA** (Paramount, 1967)—the film that gave female heroines some real "legs!"



Undead isometrics—the original queen of the shock TV hosts, Vampira (Milla Nurmi), struts her stuff in Ed Wood's infamous opus, **PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE** (J. Edward Reynolds Productions, 1956.) Also known as **GRAVE ROBBERS FROM OUTER SPACE**, this film helped Vampira get her nickname as the "wasp-waist" woman.

In the year, **ONE MILLION B.C.** (before Chaney), there was still a Chaney—Lon Jr.—in one of his first features. Following in his famous father's footsteps, Lon created and applied his own makeup for this film—something he wouldn't get the chance to do again in the shadow of the newly forming makeup artists union. Henceforth, actors would act and makeup artists would handle makeup. Had this departmentalization of duties happened a decade earlier, it's likely a giant talent like Chaney Sr.'s might never have been realized. (Carol Landis, Lon Chaney Jr., 1940.)

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(Continued from page 9.....)
easily." Producing this magazine isn't
just a job—it's a mad-venture!—RF

WANTED! MORE ARTISTS LIKE



Mopar (from the Internet)

TALKIN' BOUT THEMIDNIGHT RAMBLER

I have been a long time Lon Chaney Sr. Silent Film Fan. His chilling ability to get into and under your skin is pure magic. I am very sad that LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT remains a lost piece of the puzzle. My father saw the film during his lifetime—God rest his soul. We had many opportunities to discuss the film. He didn't consider it a good movie, and thought it was rather far fetched for its time. But he did say the Chaney make-up was masterful. What happened to the film?

Tommyj396

Via Internet Screemail

• LAM remains probably the most sought-after classic horror film of all

time. Rumors abound ever few years that someone has located a copy, but given that the nitrate film stock of the 1920s is highly volatile, it is unlikely a print has survived. But from all reports, if a copy ever does show up, fans will probably be disappointed. Some things benefit far more from their mystery. But you might check out MARK OF THE VAMPIRE, which is Browning's own remake of LAM.—Luna

"IT" SLAYS HIM

As usual, great issue, and made even better with the "IT" story. This was the movie that launched my interest in monsters when I first saw IT on a Saturday night Chiller show. The minimal scenery, dark lighting, that weird space noise, seeing the monster's slow-moving feet enter the spaceship, the creature's howling when the crew opens the heating boiler and his flailing arms as he beats unlucky crew members to death—wow, I couldn't sleep for a week thinking about that ugly alien!

Steve Scalici,
Staten Island, NY

• "IT" only ghost to show that, in the best horror films, less is indeed more!—Col. Carruthers

MI-STAKE-N IDENTITY

Just wanted to say your mag is a lot of fun, and I really enjoy all the great pics from all those Saturday afternoon monster

movies I grew up with. I did, however, have a couple of corrections to make with the Oct/Nov issue. In the article about my favorite Gothic soap, "Dark Shadows," the article referred to the mansion as "Collinswood," when in reality the name of the estate was "Collinwood." The other note I made was that the author of *The Outsiders* and *Rumblefish* is S. E. Hinton, not S. E. Timpton as the article states.

Margaret Perry

Via Internet Screemail

• Fangs for the corrections. We try to be accurate, but sometimes we're so busy biting into the necks project, we forget to be careful the new blood we bring in isn't "type-O."—Barnabas

WEB TIDE

I just spent some wonderful moments this Halloween morning going through the FM web site for the first time and having a great experience! Your dedication to the magazine and the horror genre and especially the fans is evident in all you do. I want thank you for keeping the happiest part of my childhood undead!

John Hill
Orange, CA

• We've been quite pleased to be able to use the Internet to supplement our features for our readers. Beside classic horror film trailers, FM Club Dis-members can hear Vincent Price's complete sound track to "The Tell-Tale" (Continued on page 70.....)

MYSTERY PHOTO

DEPARTMENT

CAST YOUR VOTE!

MYSTERY PHOTO #234

Transylvanians hold dear to the concept of "one person, one vote." Of course, one big problem with that system is finding a person to vote with! Another is hauling them to the ballot box. Voter turnout in Transylvania is typically 50%—the rest of the population are used as ballots. But the system does work—casting your ballot is so much work that there's never been a request for a recount in a Transylvanian election! Now it's time for you to exercise your 1-rights and join the Fang Gang—cast your ballot by writing your own *crazy* caption or twisted film title for this unidentified scene. In our next issue we'll provide the film's particulars for those of you who might not recognize it by sight.

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WINNER OF MYSTERY PHOTO #232-3

This Mystery Photo reminded me (again!) of the silver screen and movie of the screen. But first prize for this issue goes to **DAVE S. AUGSPURGER**, of Lincoln, IL, for inspiring this dramatic ditty about "reality TV."

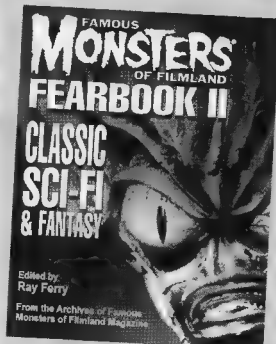
"Before the producers of the hit TV series "Survivor" finally settled on a tribal voting system to pare down the number of contestants, the original rules in the unaired pilot called for ejected contestants to be tossed into the shark-infested waters surrounding the island where they were forced to make their way to another shore...if they could."

Fangs to John Navroth, Paul Dickens, Richard Kaley, Adam Mandelbaum, Lance Brick, Kevin Rose and everyone else who wrote in.

The foto, of course, is from **BEAST OF BLOOD** (Hemisphere, 1970).

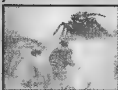


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This oversize, European-styled edition is a state-of-the-art production, printed in deep, rich tones on heavyweight archival paper, and square bound—a stunning collector's edition portfolio presentation that captures all the richness, beauty, detail and spectacle of the originals like never before. All photos have been painstakingly digitally restored to their original brilliance and are accompanied by historical background and credits in the easy



to follow index in the back. They're all here: DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, WAR OF THE WORLDS, THE TIME MACHINE, FORBIDDEN PLANET, METROPOLIS, THIS ISLAND EARTH, SUPERMAN, KING OF THE ROCKET MEN, GODZILLA, DR. CYCLOPS and many more. Over 50 great films!—A must-have for every junior space cadet and mad scientist's library!



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(Continued from page 68.....)

Heart," and excerpts from "BK and His Friends," among other treasures. We'll be adding more in the coming months. Not in the club? See page four of this issue. You'll be Vlad you did.—RF

THE SPIDER WHO LOVED ME

When I was 10 years old, my grandmother bought me my first issue of **FM**. Back then, in Indiana, we only had three TV channels. One of those had a Saturday night spook show called "Nightmare Theater" and the host was a ghoul named Sammy Terry—a legend here in the Midwest. He and his spider, "George," put me under the bed on a few occasions. Now in my mid-40s, I've found **FM** again. Sammy, to my knowledge, is still alive, but retired. Thanks for picking up the ball and letting us play again.

Pat Kelley

Via Internet Screemail

• Glad to oblige. Just remember you have to be home and tucked in before sunrise!—Mrs. Bates

I WANT FRIEND...LIKE ME

I was in Toys-R-Us yesterday and I bought one of those two-foot Frankenstein Pozers. I normally don't like goofy Frankensteins but for \$30 bucks, I thought I'd probably regret passing on it. The reason I am telling you about this is because of what I observed in the store. When I walked up to the area where they had the Universal monster stuff, there was an 8 or 9 year-old kid holding the Little Big Heads pack that has 16 different Silver Screen editions in it. He was reading aloud the names of the monsters and I was so happy that a young person seemed interested in them, especially with the Movie Maniacs just a few feet away. Then, a 5 or 6 year-old boy and his father walked over and the boy became interested in the Frankenstein Pozer and, to my surprise, the father bought it for him. I took comfort in seeing them walk away carrying the large box with the little boy so excited about his new "friend." Classic Monsters are alive and well!

Doug Whitenack
Old Bridge, NJ

• I wonder if that dad really bought the Frankie Pozer for his son or if he wanted it for himself? Today, you can't really tell who the "kids" are!—RF

HI-YO, STEVERENO!

I'm looking forward to your Steve Allen feature. His recent passing merited zero serious attention from our local media. One local New York radio station, however, thought it worthwhile to mention Howard Stern's reaction which, in essence, was that Allen was a bitter, disillusioned old man, whom the times had passed by. Can you believe that? You might want to mention to **FM** readers that there is an excellent CD from Varese

Sarabande Records called "Steve Allen On The Air," featuring over 100 minutes of Steve's best.

I read *Life Is But A Scream!* in two days and am recommending it to friends. Good luck with your fight, from an open-minded fan who appreciates your writing—especially the personal essays.

Ralph A. Pape
New York, NY

• I had the pleasure of chatting with Bill "Jose Jimenez" Dana recently and we talked at length about Steve Allen. Bill told me that in a bit he did with Steve where Bill was playing a Lugosi-inspired Dracula standing outside a blood bank. Steve asked him why the vampire wouldn't go inside. "I can't stand to see all that blood," Bill replied, "going to waste!" Allen loved horror as you'll see in the exclusive interview that begins on page 30 of this issue.

As for my writing, well—like a Lord-a-Byronessays, "I hate writing, but love having written!"—RF

THE ILL-USTRATED FAN

For some strange reason, the store I get my copies of **FM** from only got in a few copies of issue 220—the only issue I am missing from the current new series of **FM**. I am now recovering from a heart attack, so I would appreciate any help in locating a copy of issue 220.

Ken Green

Via Internet Screemail

• Slow down there, Ken! I know some fans get upset when they can't find an issue of **FM** but—a heart attack? I suggest you take two gasp-ribs, get plenty of rest and contact Steve Dolnick (see ad on page 7). Under the circumstances, you might also check to see if your HMO will reimburse you for the copy!—Dr. Waldman

WRITE TO US, MONSTER!

What did you think of this issue? Have you got a question or comment about the weird and wonderful world of classic horror? The editor personally reads every Fang Mail letter sent in, so drop a line and tell him what's on your mind. Enclose a snapshot of yourself and you might see your mug featured as a WANTED reader. If you enclose an SASE with your letter, we'll send you back a free autographed foto of our infamous editor. Write to us at:

FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND
DEPT. FANG MAIL #234
16163 NORDHOFF ST., CRYPT #510
NORTH HILLS, CA 91343

or FAX us at 818-894-1210.

or send your e-mail to:

fangmail@famousmonsters.com

(E-mailed .JPG photo attachments accepted)

HORROR HALL OF FLAME!

REMEMBERING POTENT PERSONALITIES OF HORRORWOOD!

Curt Siodmak



Legends of the silver scream—Curt Siodmak and glorious Gloria Stuart at the Famous Monsters Convention in Crystal City, VA in May, 1993.

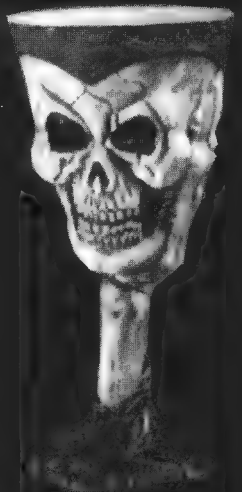
Had Curt Siodmak not come to America in 1938, the world of fantastic movies we call the Ghoulish Age of Horror would have been sorely deficient. Born August 10, 1902 in Dresden, Germany, he was educated at the University of Zurich. It was there that he met Henrietta, the woman who would be his life's companion. Curt started out as a reporter and one of his most ambitious self-assignments was to join the cast of extras on Fritz Lang's epic *METROPOLIS*, in 1926. Security on the film was extremely tight and when Lang discovered he had a reporter among his cast, Curt was promptly booted off the film. He later worked with his older brother, director Robert Siodmak and collaborated with him on many of his sibling's screen projects, the most significant being *PEOPLE ON SUNDAY* in 1929 (which he co-scripted with soon-to-be-legendary director, Billy Wilder)—a film which the Nazi party in Germany later condemned when they came to power.

Curt wrote over 50 novels, hundreds of short stories and—during his tenure in Hollywood—wrote and/or directed some of the most memorable fantasy films ever made. In Germany, he wrote the screenplay for *FP1 (Floating Platform 1)* *DOES NOT REPLY* (1932); in England: *TRANSATLANTIC TUNNEL* (1935); in Hollywood: *THE INVISIBLE MAN RETURNS*, *BLACK FRIDAY*, *THE APE* (1940); *THE WOLF MAN* (1941); *INVISIBLE AGENT* (1942); *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*, *I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE*, *SON OF DRACULA* (1943); *THE LADY AND THE MONSTER*, *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, *THE CLIMAX* (1944); *THE BEAST WITH FIVE FINGERS* (1947); *BERLIN EXPRESS* (1948); *DONOVAN'S BRAIN* (1953); *RIDERS TO THE STARS* (1954); *EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS* (1956). He directed *BRIDE OF THE GORILLA* (1951); *THE MAGNETIC MONSTER* (1953); *CURUCU—BEAST OF THE AMAZON* (1956), among others. He passed away September 2, 2000 at the age of 98.

CAPTAIN COMPANY MONSTER MAIL ORDER

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Two for \$9⁹⁵

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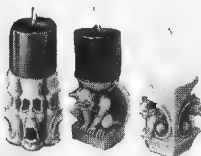


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Features 30 bizarre ads from the 1960s Captain Company pages of FM magazine! Masks, Aurora models, record albums—and that crazy man-ky! Basic slide-show style. Has password protection. (Black and white and full color images.) 3.5" high density disks.

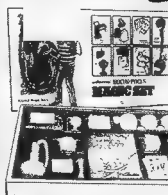
Vintage Capt. Co. Screamsaver, Vol. 1
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NEW! VAMPIRESS T-SHIRT!

The famous vamp's ghoulish face is printed in midnight black, with the infamous FM logo printed in glorious blood red. Your ghoul friend will be the death of any party in this brilliant white T-shirt!

Sizes: L & XL • \$19.95



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BLOODY BRAIN
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Item #
FMW-SK1
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FAMOUS MONSTERS' SHOCK MONSTER WRIST WATCH!

WOW! This one is a real beauty! The fiendish face of our Shock Monster mascot (in midnight black) floats above the FM logo (in blood red) on a brilliant white background—just like our FM 1960s T-shirts! This fiendish wristwatch has a brushed stainless steel case and adjustable band, rotating dial and luminous hands. Quartz accuracy, water resistant. Comes with a one-year limited warranty. Packed in its own sleek black display box.



TOR JOHNSON MASK

Flesh color with deep, red gashes in the forehead. Light weight latex mask covers the entire head. From Don Post.

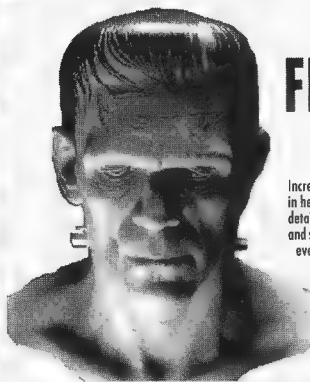
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FRANKENSTEIN BUST: Item #MOR-FIV
Only \$124.95

We include insurance on this item of no extra charge.
Also available but not shown: The Phantom of the Opera Vinyl Bust.
Order Item #MOR-FIV \$124.95

PLEASE READ THIS TO ORDER FROM CAPTAIN CO.

We process orders twice each week and usually ship on WEDNESDAYS & SATURDAYS. If you need an item right away, please call on your order and tell the operator you'd like priority handling (no extra charge). We ship standard mail but Express mail is available at additional charge. Checks must have your name, address & phone number imprinted on the check along with your bank's address. (Returned checks will be incur a \$10 bank fee.) Personal checks can take up to 3 weeks to clear so for fastest service, please remit payment by Visa or Mastercard, or certified check or money order. Credit card orders let us make sure you get our current lowest prices and best shipping rates. For your security, we do not keep credit card numbers on active file after you place an order.

FM SUBSCRIBERS GET DISCOUNTS!

By becoming a subscriber to FM you will automatically be enrolled free in the FM Club and get 10% OFF MOST ANYTHING YOU BUY FROM CAPTAIN COMPANY! (You save even more on selected items). See page 4 of this issue for details.

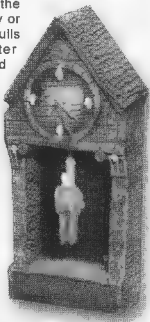
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If you are not delighted with your Captain Company purchase for any reason, simply let us know, then return it within 10 days for a full refund or credit. (Original & customer return shipping charges not refundable.) If you overpay on an order, we automatically issue a credit to you, or, upon your request, we'll send a refund of the overpayment. Software, video and audio items or personalized items are nonrefundable and will be exchanged for same title only if found to be defective in manufacture.

MASKS!

HANGING MAN WALL CLOCK

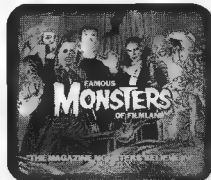
Just the thing for the kitchen, laboratory or den! Four white skulls mark the quarter hour, polished brass hour & minute hands with unfortunate victim wearing a hemp necktie swinging back & forth under the clock "tower." Battery operated, One-piece, cast hard foam and fully painted—has hook for wall mounting.



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Item # MPP-001 Only \$11.95

Cloth surface mousepad features a brilliant full color illustration of the FM Fang Gang. Perfect for home, or bring it to the office and scare your supervisor away from your desk! Appx. 8.25" x 7.75", rubber back.

OWN YOUR VERY OWN RAT FINK!



Cool daddy-ol Large full-color, poseable figure comes with a detachable souped-up skateboard Styles 00, 01, 02, 03 come with collectable decal in a window display box

- Glow/dark: #SST-RF01
- Silver: #SST-RF02
- Gray: #SST-RF03
- Green: #SST-RF04

Glow, Silver, Gray Styles: Each \$16.95
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MONSTER MODELS

Just like the Aurora originals!



Your choice:
\$34.95
Each



Choose FRANKENSTEIN, THE MUMMY, DRACULA or THE WOLF MAN! Limited supply. Order today! (Kits come unassembled.)

EACH COMES IN A REPRODUCTION OF ITS ORIGINAL BOX!



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They're Baaaaack! High quality, injection molded model kits—authentic reproductions of the spooktacular, Aurora plastic model kits, re-manufactured by Playing Mantis. Glue 'em together, paint 'em! Display 'em! Great fun for the whole family! Each kit comes in a box featuring the same fantastic art as the originals from 35 years ago! (Except for the all new Wolf Man model kit.) Supplies are limited so order your favorites today.

THE WOLF MAN!



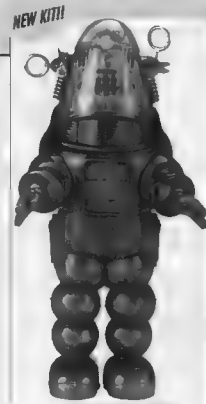
The furry fiend in an all new pose! from Playing Mantis.
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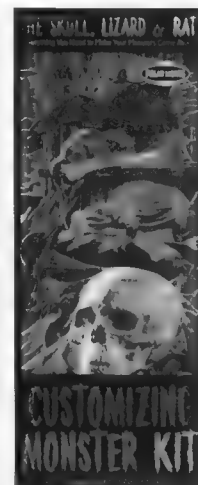
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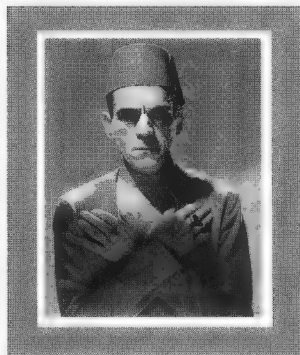
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Kool Kar, Kharis!

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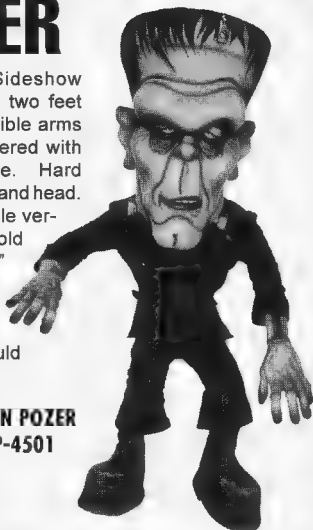
EACH
ONLY
\$11.95

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FRANKENSTEIN POZER
Item # SST-FP-4501

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4 GHOULISH CANDLE HOLDERS



Set of 4 different holders for standard stick candles! Designs inspired by the Disney™ Haunted Mansion.

Only \$14.95
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White plastic skeleton arms fit neatly into your shirt pocket and look like a fiendish friend is trying to claw its way out! The perfect accessory for the corporate set!

Only \$4.95
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Give your mail a terror-ific touch
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KONG



WEREWOLF



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MONSTER

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The Official FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND "SHOCK MONSTER" T-SHIRT!

Available again!! Just like the original!! The infamous FM Shock Monster's horrible face (printed in a deep midnight black) floats over the famous FM logo (depicted in blazing blood red in the 1960s "thin line" style) on a solid, premium-quality white T-shirt! Available in Adult sizes Medium, Large, XL. Order yours today for a return to yesteryear! (Sorry, chain, club, gorilla and young lady are not included.)

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Standard Sizes:

Medium (fits most kids) L or XL, \$15⁹⁵ each

Special Order Sizes:

XXL \$19⁹⁵ each

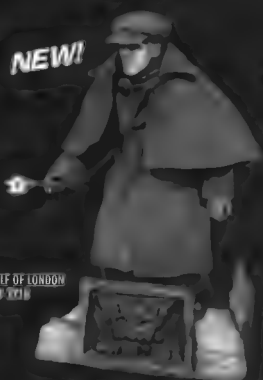
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BY SIDESHOW TOY

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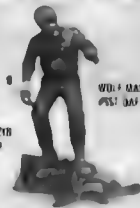
1st Edition - 1923

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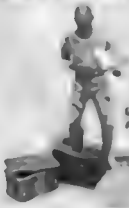
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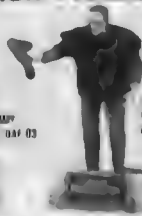
FRANKENSTEIN
#SS1-047-01



WOLF MAN
#SS1-047-02



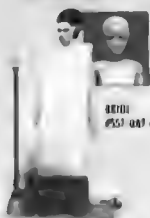
DRACULA
#SS1-047-03



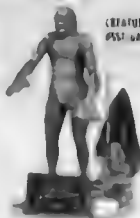
THE HUNCHBACK
OF NOTRE DAME
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FRANK KORSHIN!



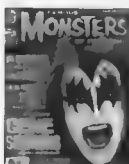
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KARLOFF'S RECORD!



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We only have a
limited supply
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now before our
inventory is all
gone!
**Sorry, but FM
#223 is all
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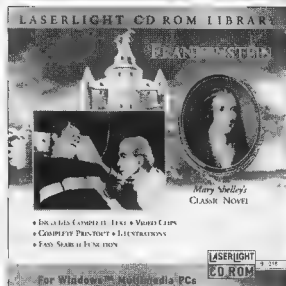
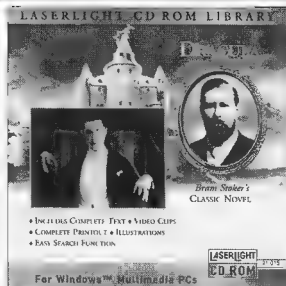
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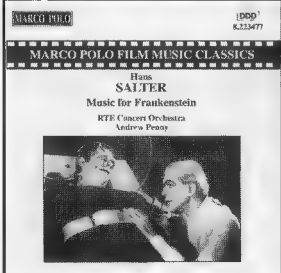
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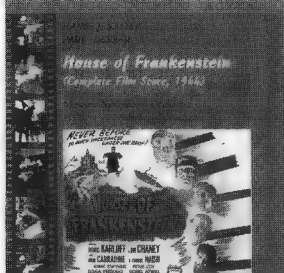
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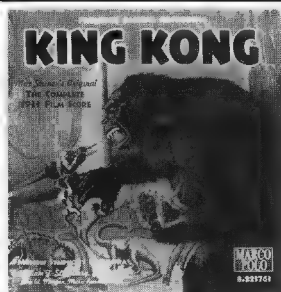
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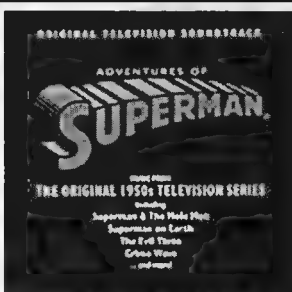
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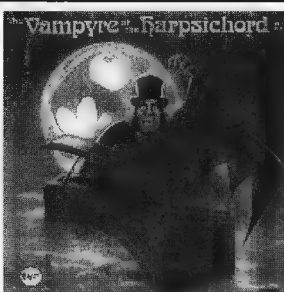
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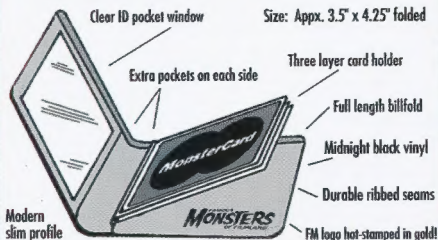


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